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THE AUTHOR IN 1908.

*From the Cartoon by Spy which appeared in "Vanity Fair," September 16, 1908.*

# P R E - W A R

BY  
EARL WINTERTON,  
P.C., M.P.

WITH A FRONTISPIECE

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## PREFATORY NOTE

I ACKNOWLEDGE with gratitude the advice and suggestions which I received from various friends who saw portions of the original manuscript of this book.

I am particularly indebted to Mr. Alan Brodrick, who read the whole of it; without the aid of his valuable criticisms and comments "Pre-War" could never have been compiled.

I hope to follow this volume with two others entitled "War" and "Post-War."

*August 29th, 1932.*

WINTERTON.





## PREFACE

THE War has been over-written. The decade prior to the War has received too little attention. Yet in it were sown most of the seeds which produced the crop of 1914-1918.

Apart from that, many of the troubles of Great Britain to-day have their roots in events which occurred prior to 1914.

So far from it being the case that the War caused these troubles, it is a fact that, on the contrary, in certain instances it delayed their growth. But for the War they would have produced their poison fruit earlier. There never was a greater delusion than the idea, so sedulously fostered by some writers, that in the years immediately preceding the declaration of War everywhere in Great Britain, save among the very poor, calm, convention, restfulness and a sense of assured peace and security prevailed.

This book deals with the period from 1904 to 1914, which covers the years of my life from twenty-one to thirty-one. During this time I had, for a young man, exceptional opportunities of seeing, and learning about, things at home and abroad.

If it be objected that my achievements were unimportant, my impressions sketchy and my judgments hasty, I would reply that I am an ex-service man, and that it is now an accepted maxim that the old men made the War, and the young men had to fight in it.

Like the youth of to-day, we were, of course, not to blame for anything which happened, even if we did overturn Edwardianism as well as Victorianism, and let the post-war generation claim the discredit for it.

Youth is always wonderful, and age always incapable; at least, that is what the writers of war books tell us.

## ERRATA

Page 3, line 32, *for* Mensdorf *read* Mensdorff.

4, line 2, *for* Mensdorf *read* Mensdorff.

36, line 23, *for* was *read* has always been.

46, lines 11 and 12, *delete* (the town stands as high above sea-level as is the top of Mont Blanc).

48, line 17, *for* American continent *read* North American continent.

line 27, *for* Don José Landa and Señor Carlos Landa *read*  
Don José de Landa and Señor Carlos de Landa.

59 (footnote <sup>1</sup>), *for* Afterwards *read* Now (1932).

116, line 24, *delete* Lord.

158 (chap. heading), *for* Stefans Platz *read* Stephansplatz.

165, line 12, *for* Harrach, Lanckoroński, Czernin, *read* the  
Harrachs, Lanckorońskis, and Czernins.

line 24, *for* Mensdorf *read* Mensdorff.

169, line 6, *delete* which, as a Hungarian, he detested.

172, line 21, *for* Fredemblatt *read* Fremdenblatt.

186, line 28, *for* Kemel *read* Kemal.

192, line 12, *for* Kemel *read* Kemal.

## CHAPTER I

Oxford—Polo and hunting—The Horsham bye-election, November 1904—The “new boy” in the House—Maiden speech—The Admiralty—Lord Fisher—H.M.S. *Enchantress*—Visit of the French fleet—Yeomanry training—Oxford again—Lord Rosebery—Mr. Winston Churchill—King Alfonso—A walking match.

At the beginning of October 1904 I went up to Oxford to begin the third year of a University career which had brought me many friendships and much fun in the saddle, hunting in winter with the Bicester, Heythrop and South Oxfordshire Hounds and, in summer, playing polo in Port Meadow; unfortunately, my two years at the University had been barren of intellectual achievement of any value, for which the fault lay wholly with me.

Early in October the Conservative Member for the Horsham Division, Mr. Heywood Johnstone, died, and on Wednesday, October 19th, I was proposed as Conservative candidate at the Selection Committee of the local Conservative Association. Thanks mainly to the support and influence of Lord Leconfield (whose unfailing kindness, help and advice alone made it possible for me to stand at all), I was chosen, at the age of twenty-one years and six months, to be the Conservative candidate in an important bye-election.

We had in those days at my home, Shillinglee Park, a pack of beagle harriers which my father hunted, with myself as whipper-in. When the former was away I hunted the pack. My relationship with my father was

more like that of a younger with an elder brother than that of a son with his father, partly because I was an only son and, when at home, always in his company. When things went wrong out hunting with our beagles, it often happened that furious arguments between huntsman and whip ensued, sometimes to the embarrassment of our small "field." When, however, we had had a good day, we rode home at perfect peace with ourselves and the whole world.

My bye-election campaign opened on October 24th. As I knew I should not get a hunt for a long time, I took the beagles out in the early morning and (in my father's absence) hunted them. There was a good scent and I had to gallop hard to keep up with the hounds. This I regarded as a good omen for the election.

I have already said that the contest was an important one. The Conservative Government had been doing badly at recent bye-elections, its supporters were divided by the Tariff Reform controversy, and its opponents exhilarated by the Chinese Labour issue, which they used in a very unscrupulous way. I had the advantage of defending a seat which had been consistently Conservative since the redistribution of the 'eighties, and I received the full support of the Tariff Reform League as well as of the Conservative Central Office. The latter provided me with one of the finest election agents in Britain, Mr. W. H. Gales, who has only recently retired from an important post in the Central Office. I received magnificent support from the Conservative and Unionist Press, especially from the *Daily Mail* and other papers belonging to the late Lord Northcliffe (then Sir Alfred Harmsworth), who took a very keen personal interest in the campaign; he lent me a very fine racing car for

the last few days of the contest, which proved very welcome after the Canadian buggy, with a polo pony to pull it, in which I had hitherto driven round the constituency. My friend and Yeomanry brother-officer, Mr. Roland Gwynne,<sup>1</sup> acted as my private secretary during the campaign, and saved me innumerable worries. My supporters vied with each other in offering me hospitality and help of every kind.

Against these advantages must be set the rising tide of resentment against the Government, which was to reach flood level fourteen months later, a bad local organisation owing to easy victories in the past, and my extreme youth and inexperience. I suffered agonies of trepidation before a meeting, and was very nervous on a platform, though not more so than my supporters were during my halting and disjointed orations and my jejune answers to questions. I had a strong, but very fair opponent in the person of Mr. Lestocq Erskaine. and the issue was in doubt until the day of the poll. Finally, on November 11th, I was elected by a majority of 784. I spent the intervening period until Parliament met in the following February in the way which I most liked: at home, hunting with the foxhounds or our beagles, and occasionally with the Warnham Staghounds and Wolmer Draghounds as well, whenever there was a horse available and the state of the weather permitted.

I took my seat on February 14th, 1905, the opening day of the new session. On the previous evening I attended an Eve of the Session reception at Lansdowne House, and was introduced by my aunt, the late Lady Lansdowne, to Count Metternich, the German Ambassador, Count Mensdorf, the Austrian Ambassador, and

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Lieut.-Colonel Gwynne, D.S.O.

other notabilities; thus began a friendship with Count Mensdorf which, I am glad to say, still flourishes.

When I took my seat, and for weeks afterwards, I experienced that feeling of deflation which is the common lot of successful candidates at bye-elections when they actually enter the House. I had been the central figure of an exciting contest, been photographed and interviewed, formed the subject of headlines in the Popular Press, such as "Boy Candidate's growing Confidence"—"Youngest M.P. on his Success"—and naturally thought no small bones of myself. When Parliament met I found that the Horsham bye-election had been forgotten. When I took my seat I was received with very mild cheers by the Government and their supporters, and with some laughter and derisive cries (directed at my youthful appearance) by the Opposition. I was, both literally and figuratively, the "new boy." Not until some days later did any Member of the Government above the rank of Under-Secretary deign to notice me in any way unless the necessarily rather mechanical handshake which I, in common with other Back Benchers, received from the Leader at the Eve of the Session reception comes into that category. No doubt this treatment is always salutary for a new Member, and was especially so for a conceited boy, as I was. But the effect was to make me exceedingly grateful to the Ambassadors who had time to talk to me at Lansdowne House, to Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, who congratulated me warmly, and to certain friends and relatives in the House who showed me kindness. On the other hand, I was somewhat resentful of the Olympian attitude of my official leaders. I will deal in a later chapter with this aloofness and its effect. It is sufficient

to add here that the Government could not afford to offend a single supporter, for it was not popular at the time in or out of the House.

On March 3rd I made my maiden speech, on a Private Member's Bill (introduced by the late Sir William Mount) to secure compensation for damage by fire caused to crops by sparks from railway engines. I received very pleasant and graceful congratulations from Sir Edward Grey<sup>1</sup> and the Attorney-General. A week or so later I became Parliamentary Private Secretary to the late Mr. Ernest Pretyman, M.P., then Financial Secretary to the Admiralty. I remained his Secretary until the resignation of the Government. I was proud of and liked this post. For the first time I met Civil Servants, and was able to appreciate the capacity and charm of that intellectual aristocracy.

Sir John Fisher<sup>2</sup> was First Sea Lord, and the late Lord Cawdor First Lord. I had first met the former thirteen or fourteen years before, when I was a small boy living with my parents at Southsea and he was at Portsmouth. At the Admiralty, by sheer personality, even when he said little or nothing, he dominated any Conference or reception of a deputation which he attended. Even those perennially pertinacious and truculent figures, Dockyard Members, quailed under his stony and hostile stare on such occasions as they visited the Admiralty.

In April I went on a delightful trip with my Chief, on the Admiralty Yacht H.M.S. *Enchantress* to inspect English and Irish dockyards. On our way from Queens-town to Plymouth we ran into heavy seas, one of which

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Viscount Grey of Fallodon.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards Lord Fisher.



smashed the chairs in the dining-saloon. I was violently sick, a misfortune I shared with one of the Sea Lords who was on board!

My connection with the Admiralty afforded me later in the year a most pleasurable experience. The French Fleet paid a visit of ceremony to Portsmouth during July. The officers were entertained at various functions in London, and at a dinner at Lansdowne House I sat next to Capitaine Lephay, commanding the *Henri IV*; my uncle, the late Lord Frederick Hamilton, sat on the other side of him. Freddie Hamilton was a remarkable man in many ways. He had been a diplomatist,<sup>1</sup> and an editor, and at the time was embarking on a career as an author, which was to prove very successful. He was a most accomplished raconteur, an admirable mimic, and the best amateur whom I have ever met at the form of combination of patter and piano-playing which the late Corney Grain made famous. As he was full of *joie de vivre*, an extraordinarily kind and hospitable man and a first-rate linguist, he made friends wherever he went on his numerous travels, and always retained them. Capitaine Lephay was so charmed with him that he invited us both to return on his ship as far as Cherbourg. So on Sunday, August 14th, Freddie and I went to Portsmouth and slept on board the *Henri IV*.

The French Fleet steamed out next morning. The British Channel Fleet was moored four deep off Spithead, and the French Fleet proceeded slowly in a long line round it. As each vessel of the latter came abreast

<sup>1</sup> He and three others of my uncles, Lords Claud, George and Ernest Hamilton, had been in the House of Commons at the same time—a record which has never been broken.

an English ship, the respective ensigns were dipped, and the crews roared their cheers. At the end there was a deafening gun salute from both fleets. A calm sea and glorious sun added to the impressiveness of the scene.

The French Captain was filled with such emotion at the event that after the salute was over he invited Freddie and me on to the bridge, had a bottle of champagne opened, and toasted England and us. Freddie replied in a short speech which my slender knowledge of French would have prevented me from clearly understanding even if my ears had heard it fully, but I was temporarily deafened by the noise of the guns, superimposed on "God Save the King" repeatedly played by the ship's band. Our National Anthem had been rendered thirty separate times almost without a pause.

After we were out of sight of land we had a most excellent luncheon with more champagne. As a result of Freddie's commendation of the food, the chef was sent for to be congratulated and patted on the back. While this ceremony was in progress we felt a slight bump. We were told later that a fishing-boat had "got in the way." What was its ultimate fate we were never told, nor did we think it tactful to inquire. Afterwards we were taken over the ship, Freddie delighting everyone by his command alike of the French language and the gestures with which Frenchmen accompany the speaking of it. Indeed, an officer said enthusiastically that he was the only foreigner whom he had ever met who was as sympathetic and intelligent as a Frenchman!

On arrival at Cherbourg we disembarked and returned home on the packet-boat. Before we took our departure, my dignity as a Member of Parliament was rather offended

by a suggestion of the Captain that one of his junior officers should "show me round the town." He added that his rank and age forbade his doing so himself, but young men naturally liked such things. I courteously declined the offer, and we parted with real regret from our kind hosts.

I had no private secretary or typist in those days, and wrote all my letters in reply to those from my constituents with my own hand. What with my work as Private Secretary to Mr. Pretyma, long hours in the House (the normal hour of rising was then midnight, not 11 p.m. as now), and voluminous correspondence, I found myself pretty busy. During the many late sittings which took place I devoted myself to continuing my interrupted education in Constitutional Law in the Library of the House of Commons. However, I had a good many intermissions and distractions from my Parliamentary work.

I was a yeomanry officer, having joined the Sussex Yeomanry in 1901. The annual training, in my regiment at any rate, was a pretty strenuous sixteen days of military work, lightened by polo before dinner and a good deal of ragging afterwards. In 1905 we were in camp at Lewes; I had a chestnut horse called "Sutro," who performed the unusual feat of jumping two cane armchairs placed back to back; it was moonlight as I rode him over them for a bet after mess. We also had a race meeting on the last day of this camp; the authorities of Lewes Racecourse very kindly allowed us to race on part of the course. I won the officers' flat race on a horse of Mr. Walter Dawtrey's, a well-known Sussex farmer and horse-dealer, and one of the best men to hounds whom I have ever seen in any country. He

was at the time Regimental Sergeant-Major of the Sussex Yeomanry, and remained so until the outbreak of War, when he got a commission.

Next day I went with a scratch team of Members of the House of Commons to play polo against Oxford University. The players were Mr. Mildmay,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Raymond Greene,<sup>2</sup> Mr. Winston Churchill, and I. All of us, except Mr. Churchill, were riding hireling ponies, Oxford polo was notoriously bad, and the ground was rather difficult to reach. I was, therefore, surprised to see, as I drove up, a large crowd, including a number of earnest-looking men and women, seldom seen at an Oxford Polo Club Match in Port Meadow. I realised that they had come to see Mr. Churchill, whose name was on everyone's lips at the time. More notice, I think, was taken in those days of prominent politicians "out of business hours" than is the case now. They hadn't the attraction of film stars with which to compete.

I went up to Oxford for many week-ends during that summer, as most of my friends were still "up." Once I attended, as an Old Member, a Bullingdon dinner, with the late Mr. Neil Primrose in the chair, and his father, Lord Rosebery, as a guest. The latter made a charming and amusing speech in reply to the toast of his health. Afterwards many of us (but not Lord Rosebery!) adjourned to Christ Church, where a bonfire was lit in the "Quad" and we indulged in other illicit activities. Next day I received a letter from the Senior Censor of Christ Church, couched in the most formal terms, to the effect that it had been reported to him that I was one of a number of "strangers" who had entered

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Lord Mildmay of Flete, P.C., D.L.

<sup>2</sup> Now (1932) Sir Raymond Greene, Bart., D.S.O.

the "House" late in the evening, caused a serious disturbance, and insulted the Dean by shouting under his window; he said that he considered that I ought to apologise. No doubt I should have done so, but as I found out that he had taken no notice of the conduct of many other "strangers," and as I thought the tone of his letter very pompous, I wrote in reply that I refused to apologise, since I believed he had selected me alone for his admonitions solely because he knew that public knowledge of the affair would cost me my seat. It was a foolish and ill-mannered letter, and fortunately for me was treated by the Senior Censor with the silent contempt which it deserved. I was rather unfortunate on this particular visit to Oxford, for a day or two later I went to Blenheim, where the Oxford Yeomanry were in camp, in order to "gallop" for Sir Robert Hermon-Hodge,<sup>1</sup> who commanded the regiment, during an inspection by Sir Ian Hamilton. In the evening there was a mounted "hare and hounds" in the park. The "hounds" were the present Lord and Lady Londonderry, the Duke of Marlborough, Mr. Winston Churchill and his brother, Mr. John Churchill, the late Sir Charles Rose, M.P., and I. As we lined up for the start, a professional photographer stood in front; the flag fell before he had finished taking his pictures, and as the horse which I was riding pulled a bit, I was unable to steer clear of him; I knocked him head over heels and he literally rolled over in the mud, for it had been raining hard earlier in the day, and his plates were scattered in all directions. I couldn't have stopped to find out how he was if I had wanted to, as I was a mere passenger on the pulling horse. However, I saw him, over my left

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Lord Wyfold.

shoulder, pick himself up, so concluded he was not seriously hurt. When we got back, a full apology and compensation for his ruined clothes and plates put things all right.

In addition to the visit of the French Fleet, this summer of 1905 was notable, in a social sense, for the visit of King Alfonso, then unmarried. Princess Ena of Battenberg had come out earlier in the summer at a party at Kensington Palace, which I remember to have been so crowded as to make any movement almost impossible. I met the King at a dinner at Lansdowne House, at which were the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, and other notabilities. On Mr. Austen Chamberlain<sup>1</sup> being presented, His Majesty said, "In my country all Finance Ministers look very harassed and depressed, but you look cheerful." Alas, that could not be said of any British Chancellor to-day!

I rather prided myself on my capacity as a walker in those days, having won two matches a year or so before. At the Bullingdon dinner to which I have just referred I met a well-known racing friend of mine, who had been up with me, and, as a result of a conversation, he challenged me to a race of a mile for a "pony." We carried out the contest at seven o'clock one morning in Kensington Gardens, starting from the Albert Memorial. I soon realised that, despite appearances to the contrary, he could move like a professional walker, and I was beaten in the first quarter-mile. Though a large winner that year on the Turf, he thought it worth while to train especially for the event, whereas late hours in the House and elsewhere caused me to be decidedly unfit.

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Sir Austen Chamberlain, K.G., P.C., M.P.

## CHAPTER II

A failing Government—Election of Mr. Speaker Lowther—Sir Michael Hicks-Beach—Mr. Balfour and Mr. Chamberlain—A clash of contrasts—The 1906 Election—Electioneering then and now—Conservative Party differences—The new Government—Unfair treatment of the Opposition—The remedy applied.

It was evident all through the Session of 1905 that the Government as a Government was failing fast, despite the production of an excellent Budget. The Brighton bye-election and other events were clear pointers. The Government feared, frankly, to face a fiscal debate. On a Private Members' night, when a resolution proposed by Mr. Churchill against Colonial Preference was under discussion, the previous question was moved. On another, the Government and its followers simply stayed away.

All this may have been good tactics, but it greatly disheartened supporters in the country, nor was the Government altogether happy in its conduct of business. In July it brought in redistribution proposals in the form of resolutions. The Speaker ruled that each resolution would have to be taken separately, a possibility which the Chief Whip and Minister in charge had both overlooked, so the resolutions were dropped, for lack of time entirely precluded discussion of them. Feeling between the "Chamberlainites" and "Balfourites" was

very bad, and over the whole Conservative Party brooded a cloud of mutual recrimination, general despondency and apprehension as to the future.

Among incidents which stand out in my memory of that session was the election of Mr. Lowther<sup>1</sup> as Speaker. Mr. Speaker Gully<sup>2</sup> retired early in June. For the first and only time in my life I heard Sir Michael Hicks-Beach<sup>3</sup> speak, in proposing Mr. Lowther. It was a model of what such a speech should be—witty, concise, polished, dignified and delivered in a charming, modulated voice. I think this was the last time “Black Michael” ever spoke in the assembly where he had been for so many years a potent and formidable figure.

The Government relied to restore its waning popularity on an Aliens Bill which was passed this session. The Bill was clearly needed, since, incredible as it may seem to-day, there was at that time no restriction of any sort upon the entry of an alien, however diseased, destitute or criminal, into Great Britain. Certain districts of London and other large towns were slowly being annexed by the ever-increasing immigration of Russian and Polish Jews, and the problems alike of clearing the slums and finding work for people of British birth in poor and densely crowded areas were being rendered more and more difficult of solution. The Bill, before it passed, was a platform asset, as I discovered at the Horsham bye-election. But after its passage, I do not think that the Act gained us a single vote; the cynical attitude of the Opposition in crying to Heaven against the monstrous injustice of the introduction of Chinese

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Viscount Ullswater, G.C.B., P.C.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards Viscount Selby.

<sup>3</sup> Afterwards Earl St. Aldwyn.



labour into South Africa, while at the same time opposing<sup>1</sup> and obstructing reasonable restrictions against the admission of foreign labour here, went unpunished by the voters. The truth is, that when the public are palpably tired of a Government, neither anything virtuous that it does nor anything unpatriotic or unmoral that its opponents do, much affects the casting of votes at the ensuing election.

When the Election did come, in January 1906, the Conservative crash was greater than the most pessimistic member of our Party had believed to be possible. There were many causes for this *débâcle*: among the more important were the differences in fiscal policy between Mr. Balfour<sup>2</sup> and Mr. Chamberlain.

I have never yet found in a memoir or history of the period any real attempt to apportion the blame between the two statesmen for a division of opinion in the Conservative forces at the election which, apart from any other circumstance, would almost inevitably have resulted in defeat. I cannot pretend to be unbiassed, for I was a strong Tariff Reformer and, until his breakdown in health, Mr. Chamberlain's Parliamentary Private Secretary in the 1906 Parliament. I can, however, give my impressions.

The enemies of Mr. Chamberlain, within the Party, averred that he was an "old man in a hurry" who had propounded views best calculated to cause the maximum of discord in the Tory Party; that he was ignorant of, or fatuously disregardful of, the previous history of disastrous events connected with the Protectionist issue in that Party; that the public would never again vote for

<sup>1</sup> They did not vote (though most of them spoke) against the Second Reading, but they fought every line of the Bill in Committee.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards Earl Balfour.

Protection with Colonial Preference—in Lord Beaconsfield's words, "It was not only dead but damned"—even if Mr. Chamberlain's arguments and his deductions from the existing economic situation had not been fallacious. Finally, they charged him with being a man of overweening and unscrupulous ambition, determined one day to be a Conservative Prime Minister.

Some of these charges will not bear the weight of the most cursory examination, while others are mutually destructive. For instance, no man of Mr. Chamberlain's knowledge and political experience, in the hope of making himself Prime Minister, would have put forward a policy which he knew would require years of exposition before it would be accepted. If the brutal truth be told, Mr. Balfour was so mistrusted by powerful sections in our Party at the time that, had Mr. Chamberlain himself remained quiescent, the Liberal-Unionist wing led by him would in all probability have demanded that their Leader take Mr. Balfour's place. Had personal ambition been the main motive force of Mr. Chamberlain's actions, he would never have left the Liberal Party, since no one in it could have disputed his successorship to Mr. Gladstone. Some of Mr. Chamberlain's views on Protection with Imperial Preference showed evidence of insufficient knowledge of the economic situation of that time. But events, during and since the war, have proved strikingly that, in his main contentions, he was right. His apprehensions may have been premature, but his anticipations were correct to the letter.

Mr. Chamberlain's friends claimed for him that he understood the man-in-the-street, and was understood by him in a fashion infinitely surpassing that of any statesman of the time. That he was an incomparable

platform speaker, possessing alike the directness and hitting power which the public knows and understands. That, almost alone among his late colleagues in the Unionist Government, he had added to his reputation while in it, and had, unaided, by his administration, made, for the first time, an efficient instrument of the Colonial Office. Lastly, they claimed for him that while not a country gentleman, or familiar with some aspects of English life, he did represent that great constituent element of our Party, the successful man of affairs; that he was deep-rooted in the local and municipal life of the great town to whose welfare and prosperity he had so greatly added; moreover, that he had been ever mindful of the interests of the wage-earners.

The supporters and admirers of Mr. Balfour acclaimed him as being incomparably the greatest intellectual force in the House of Commons; they pointed out that in political experience and administrative knowledge he was the superior of anyone in active political life; that, by great dexterity, patience and adroitness in debate, he had preserved at least the façade of Party unity, and prevented the irretrievable ruin in which Mr. Chamberlain's rash proposals would have involved it. Behind that façade, they said, he would eventually be able to rebuild a stable edifice of policy. Finally, using that line of argument which in later years became known as the "inevitability of gradualness," they asserted that the only way to get the British people to authorise a vital change in accepted fiscal dogma was, in the first instance, to ask merely, as he did, for a mandate to retaliate against tariff discrimination.

Much of this, obviously, was true. In quickness of perception, deftness of touch and wide mental range,

the late Lord Balfour was without a rival in the political world. He had rare physical and mental courage, which was fully displayed, not only in his early days as Chief Secretary for Ireland, but also in later years during the War. These qualities enabled him to withstand abuse and contumely without flinching when taking a course which he knew to be unpopular but was convinced was right.

The validity of his supporters' claim that his line of compromise was tactically sound is, in my judgment, open to grave doubt. We Chamberlainites, or "whole-hoggers," always asserted that the whole armoury of Free Trade prejudice would be turned against any proposal involving protective duties; so that the Balfour policy, whilst discouraging friends, would never turn the heart of a single enemy, and would fail to appeal to the neutral voter. I think that events at the 1906 Election justified our belief, but that is a point on which even to-day it is impossible to find agreement among onlookers of the time.

Mr. Balfour's enemies in the Unionist Party—and they were by no means few, or unimportant—said that however skilful a debater he might be, he was involved and uninspiring on a platform, and conveyed no clear message to his hearers. They protested that he had a manner *de haut en bas* with his supporters, and that he neither knew nor cared whom they were, or what they had done, or what they represented. They were convinced that he did not always support his colleagues and subordinates, and instanced the case of Mr. George Wyndham. They said that he was wholly out of touch with the ordinary voter; further, they added, that, though possessing a country estate, he was in no real sense a country gentleman, had few interests in country life, and chose his friends

from among a small, exclusive, and by no means typical section of London society. In private conversation his detractors would say, "Our Party is mainly composed of country gentlemen and the British *bourgeoisie*. A successful man of the middle classes, like Joe Chamberlain, or a *grand seigneur*, as old Salisbury was, understands thoroughly at least one of those sections; a philosopher and a dilettante like Balfour has no point of contact with either; they don't understand him, and he doesn't understand them."

These criticisms, not all of which, because of British standards of good taste, appeared in speeches or print at the time, merit more detailed examination than I have the space for here. But I will make some comments on them.

Lord Balfour was not a good platform speaker, and never claimed to be. He was a devastating critic and magnificent defender in debate, according to the necessities of the case. In twenty-seven years' experience of the House of Commons I have never seen any one who approached him in these respects. He was often disappointing on big occasions when he had to make a set speech. I suspect it to have been due to a certain natural indolence of disposition, in connection with matters which he regarded as unessential, which made him despise preparation. He had a pre-occupied and distraught air when passing through the Lobbies, even more pronounced than that of most Leaders of Parties. Like so many Prime Ministers before and since, he lacked a Private Secretary who would say, "I know how tired and busy you are, but you simply must be introduced to A; you know he has just won that bye-election," or, "B is feeling very disgruntled, and the Whips are concerned

about the matter. He is a bit of a snob, and if you pass the time of day with him during the next division, it may heal his trouble." But apparently this never happened, and "A. J. B." would often pass an important supporter every day for weeks without a sign of recognition. Everyone must sympathise with a Leader of a Party in the House of Commons, harassed as he always is by every sort of problem, both soluble and insoluble, in his avoidance of the boredom and strain imposed by having to engage in polite banalities with Private Members every time he passes through the Division Lobby. But when all allowance is made for this, most of them would avoid many misunderstandings and considerable unpopularity if they were more accessible on ordinary occasions. They need the quality, possessed by many royal personages, of memorising and being able instantly to recognise faces. The pity was that so few of his followers in the 1900 Parliament and later met "A. J. B." in private life, because to meet him at a country house-party, or even at a single luncheon or dinner, was to lose at once every arm of criticism and disapproval. In a fairly wide experience of all sorts of society in different lands, I have never met a man of such outstanding charm and distinction. Until his last illness he was the success of every week-end party of which he was a member. With his vivid and inquisitive mind, he never despaired of the most unlikely mental source in others; he would listen with rapt attention to the jejune comments of the youngest male or female guest, and with respectful interest to the fatuous platitudes of the greatest bore. Thus he was *sympathique* to all, apart from his own command of conversation as a fine art, seasoned, as his was, with satire, humour and wide range of knowledge.

But of this the public knew nothing. They did know that he lived almost entirely in a small set, some of whom had been "Souls"; they did not know exactly what the "Souls" were, but vaguely disapproved of them. Thus one's supporters would say to one, "We want a *man* like good old Joe Chamberlain as a Leader, not a 'Soul' like Balfour." If you asked them to define a "Soul," they were silent. It was just something they didn't understand, and, in consequence, disliked, and that was that!

I doubt if Lord Balfour's small circle of intimate friends realised the extent to which their annexation of his time did him harm. I was privileged, in later years, to know many of those friends, and to enjoy the hospitality of some of them. Nothing could have been more delightful and innocent than this circle of intimate friendship, based on a common intellectual stock of the highest order; the least snobbish of men or women (and I don't pretend to be less of a snob than most Englishmen) could not but feel a delight in a *milieu* where birth and breeding were joined to great intellectual distinction and artistic perception, especially when set in a material framework of historic houses, lovely pictures and gardens, excellent cooking and fine possessions generally. But it was not a Society which the public understood or the value of which it could appreciate. The members of it did not claim any knowledge of or contact with the man-in-the-street. The British worship of aristocracy demands some popular sporting peer—preferably known by his tie, button-hole or cigar—as its hero, or else some titled landlord, with vast possessions, interested in many forms of activity in his own county. In both cases he can talk to them and they

to him. They have a language and stock of ideas in common.

The time of a Leader of a Party, even in his leisure, is never really his own. What he says and does, and with whom he consorts, become known through the agency of subordinates, and in other ways, just as surely as if they were stated in print in the vulgar and blatant fashion in which the private lives of prominent persons are travestied in certain American newspapers.

The General Election of 1906 was perhaps the most difficult one which any Conservative and Unionist candidate has ever had to fight. It may be that in certain industrial areas the extreme Socialist and Communist element has been more violently disposed towards Conservative candidates at elections since the War than before it. But I do not think that in the country generally, to-day, there is as much violence at election time as was displayed at this 1906 Election. Even in peaceful southern constituencies such as mine we were menaced by physical violence in certain villages. Gangs composed of roughs of the more disreputable elements among the Radicals used to lurk in the dark outside our meetings and pelt my supporters, as they left, with mud, refuse and sometimes with stones. I am thankful to say that such incidents are practically unknown in Sussex to-day, due in part to a higher standard of conduct and education, but also to the better communal feeling engendered by village institutes, concerts, dances and the like. The police also had less authority than they have to-day. At one of my meetings in 1906 a policeman who came in to try to quell constant disorder and interruption was pushed into the street and his helmet used as a football. In the placid south to-day the



appearance of a single policeman invariably prevents the further development of any incipient trouble. Candidates since the War have sometimes had to undergo the unpleasant ordeal of stones being thrown at their cars as they leave a meeting. But such incidents were much worse in the days of horses and carriages. It was almost a foretaste of the War to have to drive in a carriage through a hostile crowd from a meeting. The horses had probably been waiting and were cold. When, added to this, they had to endure yelling, shouting, mud-throwing and attempts to upset the vehicle which they were drawing, they were apt to get mad with terror. All this was very disturbing to the nerves of an average family coachman, accustomed to peaceful progress over quiet country roads.

I had a harder fight in the General Election of 1906 than I had at the bye-election in 1904, and my majority was reduced to 617. In the latter stages of the fight I had the valuable assistance of my friend Mr. George Courthope,<sup>1</sup> M.P., who had won a seat from the Liberals at Rye.

It was natural that after the Election the Tariff Reform Members of Parliament who supported in its entirety Mr. Chamberlain's policy should be concerned about the future course of events; not one of us was satisfied with the official policy, as enunciated by Mr. Balfour, of fiscal retaliation, and most of us, if the truth be told, were dissatisfied with his leadership also.

As a consequence, a number of us had several meetings at the late Sir Gilbert Parker's house. At these gatherings I met, for the first time, Mr. F. E. Smith,<sup>2</sup> M.P., and

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Sir George Courthope, Bart., M.C., M.P.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards Earl of Birkenhead.

thus began a deep and affectionate friendship which ended only with his premature death. Mr. Chamberlain was not present at these meetings, nor were they instigated in any way by him. Further, for obvious reasons, neither Mr. Austen Chamberlain nor any Member of the previous Government who was a Tariff Reformer was present.

At our first discussion we decided to get up a petition to Mr. Balfour to call a Party meeting; we were in favour also of proposing a "whole-hog" Tariff Reform resolution at that meeting if it were held, but we considered we ought to obtain Mr. Chamberlain's views before taking a final decision on this point. By the time we resumed discussions, a few days later, we had got fifty signatures from Conservative and Unionist M.P.'s for the petition, which was duly forwarded to the Leader of the Party. I believe that Mr. Balfour, by that time, had decided to hold a Party meeting, though no public announcement of the fact had been made. But in any case he could hardly have failed to agree to a petition signed by almost one-third of his Party in the House of Commons. The gathering heard, through a letter sent to one of its members, Mr. Chamberlain's views on the suggestion which we favoured of a General Tariff resolution at the meeting. He deprecated it on the grounds that: (1) if it were carried it would almost certainly result in Mr. Balfour's resignation; (2) if it were not, it would do our cause harm.

The facts about these Tariff Reform meetings have never been made public until now; in the Press at the time there were merely references to the Tariff Reform "Adullamites" having met. From what I have described, it will be seen that Mr. Chamberlain did not show

the slightest inclination or desire to supplant Mr. Balfour as Leader, but, indeed, was anxious to avoid embarrassing him. His attitude was that of a wise guide who sought to curb the rash enthusiasm of his followers.

Naturally, we accepted his advice, but wrote to him, through the late Lord Ridley, to emphasise our desire for some action to ensure that things should not remain as they were. In consequence, Mr. Chamberlain communicated with Mr. Balfour, and I have no doubt that this was the genesis of the famous "Valentine letter." In this letter to Mr. Chamberlain, which was published on Valentine's Day, the Leader of the Party agreed that in certain circumstances both a general tariff and a duty on foreign corn would not be inadmissible. This was a great gain for us, and we were jubilant. The Press and the public, however, were rather astonished at the suddenness of what was, in effect, a *volte-face*. As I have said, they knew nothing of the meetings at Sir Gilbert Parker's house.

The Party meeting was held at Lansdowne House on February 15th. We Tariff Reformers, having gained our main point, had no object in being truculent, and a resolution of confidence in Mr. Balfour was carried unanimously. Nevertheless, there was an atmosphere of suppressed excitement and hostility which, when there is a real division of opinion on a big issue, is the invariable concomitant of Party meetings. On this occasion the Unionist Free Traders, who were resolutely opposed to food duties, were, not unreasonably, annoyed at the recent turn of events. They did not, however, carry their resentment farther than protesting speeches.

Party meetings are curious affairs, and usually rather unpleasant. For some reason, they excite those usually

suave, tactful and very calm individuals—the Whips. It was so in this instance. Soon after this meeting Mr. Chamberlain was asked to lead the Party in the House until Mr. Balfour, who had lost his seat at the General Election, could, through the resignation of some obliging follower, find another one. On the surface peace within the Party was restored, and internecine strife was over.

The new Liberal Ministry was strong in personnel. In addition to those senior Members who had been in former Liberal Governments, it contained a number of outstanding young men, such as Mr. Winston Churchill, Mr. McKenna and Mr. Runciman. The achievements of the Ministers in their Departments were more uneven than is the case with most Governments. Mr. John Burns was a great success at the Local Government Board, as was Mr. Haldane<sup>1</sup> at the War Office. To the latter, the country owes a reorganisation of the Army, the formation of the Expeditionary Force, and the establishment of the Territorial Force. Despite certain qualities (which made him very unpopular with our Party), he was a great statesman and a great patriot. At the other end of the scale came Mr. Birrell. Though possessing a brilliant intellect and great powers of oratory, he was thoroughly unsuccessful in his administration both at the Board of Education and at the Irish Office. The British people are generous in forgetting the failures of individual politicians, and in after years, when he had retired from politics, Mr. Birrell largely escaped the condemnation which he should have incurred for his share in hastening the disintegration and demoralisation of the machinery of government in Ireland.

There were other Ministers whose place in our

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Viscount Haldane.

political history it is more difficult to assign. Among them was Sir Edward Grey. Contrary to what is, I know, the general impression, I consider that his own book proves that he had when he entered his office a certain *naïveté*, combined with lack of pre-requisite knowledge of the world at large, and of foreign affairs in particular. I found in my travels about Europe in the years before the War that there was more confidence among our fellow-countrymen abroad in his honesty than there was in his judgment. He gives one the impression of having been the passive spectator, rather than, in any degree, a moulder of events. He had, of course, the disadvantage of an ignorant and rabid Little-England majority behind him in the House of Commons; but his charm of manner, joined to a delightful personality and felicitous command of language, allowed him to be a weak administrator and still "get away with it."

The Government was, as I have implied, a strong team, and, on the whole, superior to its predecessors. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was a successful Leader during the two years of his Premiership. I think that our Leaders rather underrated alike his capacity and his intelligence. He was far abler than he appeared to be.

The size of the Liberal majority was unexpected, even by the Party managers, who, in many instances, had put up, in what were regarded as hopeless seats, candidates of very extreme views who were never expected to get in. A number of them, however, won these seats, and became a source of some embarrassment to the Government. As a result, in the Government ranks the narrow, bitter, partisan views which the Nonconformist conscience then produced in its lower

manifestations were grossly over-represented. It is impossible to exaggerate the extremism at the time of this section of British opinion. It was imbued with a fanatical hatred of both the Church of England and of the Roman Catholic Church; it regarded all landlords as allies of the Devil, and, indeed, all rich men as surely destined for Hell unless they happened also to be Non-conformists; to be a soldier or sailor was to serve Anti-Christ; to believe in the Empire or in the greatness of Britain anywhere overseas was to deny the truth of the Sermon on the Mount.

To-day, this mixture of Little Englandism, class hatred and religious bigotry has, fortunately for the country, split into two or three hostile groups. Those who hate their neighbours' wealth more than they hate his religion have joined the Communist or Socialist Party; those to whom sectarianism is the most important thing in life continue to vote Liberal, but even in the Liberal Party their influence is waning.

The immense Liberal majority of 1906 had, as close allies, the newly born Labour Party of fifty-two members, then in all the arrogance of its first youth. In addition, the Government had, as irregular allies, the Irish Nationalist Party. Thus the Conservative and Unionist Opposition, smaller in numbers than it had ever been before or has been since, found itself faced by a formidable mass of opponents. In addition, this Government bloc behaved, at first, with an arrogance, an insolence and an unfairness to the Opposition which had rarely been displayed by any majority before.

In the first few weeks of the session our Front Bench speakers were, whenever they spoke, assailed with rude interruptions of a personal nature, and our Back Benchers

were treated in even worse fashion; the Chief Whip of the Government showed no desire to meet the Chief Whip of the Opposition in the matter of business. Spokesmen for the Government adopted an attitude of scarcely veiled contempt.

Before the middle of the Session this intolerant behaviour had been successfully countered by three factors :

(1) Mr. Balfour's incomparable dexterity in debate, which even the ruder Radicals were forced to admire.

(2) Mr. F. E. Smith's series of brilliantly corrosive and devastating attacks on the smug self-righteousness of the Government.

(3) The action of a small number of us, young in years and heedless alike of our reputations and the opinion of the House as a whole, in counter-attacking interruptions and bullying by even more aggressive interruptions and questions, and by prolonging debate into the small hours whenever we were unfairly treated.

We were considerably criticised for our violence at the time, as we expected to be, in certain pompous quarters, including sections of the Press of our own Party. The cant statement was made that the good sense of the House as a whole would, in time, curb the pretensions of the majority. In fact, there is only one way in which a down-trodden Opposition can assert itself, and that is by meeting insolence with greater insolence. Then the Chair, the Leader of the House and individual Ministers alike, in different ways, take steps to restrain Government supporters because none

of them desires to have the reprisals and scenes which follow attacks. Though there were, in those days, some things which I said and did which in calmer moments I should have avoided, I am not the least ashamed, at this distance of time, of my share in the movement.

As I have said, one of our methods of counter-attack was the time-honoured one of keeping the House sitting late at night whenever we considered the Opposition had been unfairly treated. Our own Whips seldom attempted to interfere with us unless they had made a bargain with the Government Whips in regard to business. But this seldom happened, since, as we have seen, the relations between the two Whips' offices were not good.

Sometimes in the small hours of the morning we would ourselves come to an agreement with the Chief Whip of the Government, and allow him to pass certain orders without discussion, provided he did not take any more. On one such occasion I had said that we would not oppose the stages of a certain measure down for discussion if no more "business" was taken that night (or rather in that early morning), and to this the Chief Whip assented. However, a friend of mine insisted on making a long speech. The late Mr. William Redmond then rose and said that he deplored that the Turnour agreement had not been kept, and that if I aspired to lead a Party successfully at the age of twenty-three, I must really keep my followers in better order. Mr. Willie Redmond was easily the best of the Irishmen in the lighter forms of the humour of his native land, just as the late Mr. Timothy Healy excelled in those more subtle and satirical. Both were popular Members of the House, and the former's gallant end in the War was greatly mourned.



### CHAPTER III

Three notable debates—Mr. Joseph Chamberlain—King Edward VII at Midhurst—Sir Ian Hamilton—The Cavalry School at Netheravon—All Souls—Military Manœuvres—Lord Methuen and Sir John French—Newmarket—Parliamentary manners then and now—S.S. *Baltic*—New York—"Rector's"—Philadelphia—American travel—Philadelphia to Mexico City.

THIS book does not profess to be a chronicle of Parliament, but there were three debates in the early part of the Session of 1906 of such outstanding interest that I must refer to them. The first of them took place on a Private Member's motion, expressing the opinion that the electors of the country had given unqualified adherence to the principles of Free Trade at the last Election. Both Mr. Balfour and Mr. Chamberlain spoke. It was the former's first speech on his reappearance in the House after the bye-election in the City. He had hardly got his legs in the new House, and his dialectics were a trifle finicky. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman made the speech of his life in replying to him. Flushed with anger, and looking like a *mouton enragé*, he made an undoubtedly effective retort in a sympathetic House. He said that Mr. Balfour had learnt nothing, forgotten nothing, and had come back to the new House of Commons "with the same airy graces, the same subtle dialectics, the same light and frivolous way of dealing with a great question." He concluded his speech by saying, "Enough of this foolery." In the same

debate, Mr. F. E. Smith made his maiden speech. In audacious brilliance and in devastating attack on the Government (based on the very words of its own speeches) for its attempt to conceal, by the motion, the discreditable part which the bogey of Chinese labour had played in the Election, the late Lord Birkenhead's first speech stands pre-eminent and unchallenged among maiden speeches.

The second debate was occasioned by another Private Member's motion, that of the late Mr. Byles, censuring Lord Milner for his conduct as High Commissioner in South Africa. Mr. Byles, who gained an unenviable notoriety by this motion, made an offensive and abusive attack on Lord Milner for having sanctioned the flogging of Chinese labourers. Mr. Churchill, as Under-Secretary for the Colonies, moved an amendment condemning the flogging, but deprecating, in the interests of peace and good feeling, any censure on individuals. The amendment was a somewhat unhappy method of carrying out a Ministerial duty of defending a former public servant, and Mr. Balfour rightly trounced the Government for its "insulting protection." Feeling ran very high in the debate. Mr. Churchill by this speech did some harm to his rising reputation, but he rapidly rehabilitated himself.

The third debate was on a Trade Disputes Bill introduced by a Private Member (Mr. Hudson) on March 30th. The Government had brought in a Bill of its own in the previous week to make an amendment of the law regarding Trade Disputes; some alteration was clearly needed to meet the circumstances arising out of the Taff Vale Judgment. The Attorney-General had expressly condemned a certain proposal which appeared in the Private

Member's Bill as being dangerous. Events twenty years later proved him to be right. The Government, however, accepted Mr. Hudson's Bill in preference to its own. Even the fact that it threw over its Attorney-General was less blameworthy than its starting an evil practice of yielding to Trades Union pressure.

From soon after the beginning of the session, and until his breakdown in health, I acted as Mr. Joseph Chamberlain's Parliamentary Private Secretary. Mr. Chamberlain had been my political hero for some time, and to work for him in any case would have been an honour and a delight. But I found, in close association with him, that Mr. Chamberlain was much more than a statesman and an incomparable political fighter: he was a man of great charm, kindness and consideration. He was a born host; I enjoyed immensely lunches and dinners at 40 Princes Gardens, and week-ends at Highbury. He was an excellent listener, and I remember the vivid interest with which he heard a description by Sir Ian Hamilton about his recent experiences in the Russo-Japanese War. One may differ from Sir Ian in his military views, and from many of the conclusions which he has reached, in the course of his life, on men and events, but no one can deny the charm of his conversation and writings.

In the early summer of 1906 I was present at the opening by the King of the King Edward VII Sanatorium for Consumptives (which was in my constituency before the boundaries were changed in 1918).

I had my fill of "amateur soldiering" that year. In the spring I attended a course at the Cavalry School at Netheravon; then I went to camp with my own

regiment, and later (during the recess) I was attached to the staff of two G.-O.-C.'s during manœuvres. These were the late Lord Methuen, who commanded the Eastern Division, which trained for three weeks on the downs in East Sussex, and the late Sir John French,<sup>1</sup> who commanded the Aldershot Division, which trained for a week on the Goodwood downs.

The Cavalry School in those days was open to Yeomanry officers (to the best of my recollection) for four periods of a month each year. The course was a fairly strenuous one, and the instruction was excellent; the Yeomanry was, in a sense, a close corporation in those days; an officer in one regiment usually found that a proportion of the officers in every other regiment had been at school or the University with him. We were a very cheerful and happy mess, and I met a lot of old friends; among them was Mr. Edward Wood,<sup>2</sup> with whom I have enjoyed a friendship ever since he (very properly) administered physical chastisement to me as Captain of My Tutor's (W. Durnford's) at Eton. He invited me, during one of our week-end leaves, to go and stay with him as his guest at All Souls. I was slightly awed by the atmosphere of the place, though I enjoyed the intellectual charm and distinction of the Sunday evening gathering. Still, I had been more in my element the night before at a particularly uproarious dinner of the Bullingdon Club, which was followed by a game of chance. My host suggested that it was unnecessary to mention to the elderly residents of All Souls that I had been to this function; since some of them, he said, would never have heard of the institution in question,

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Field-Marshal The Earl of Ypres.

<sup>2</sup> Now (1932) Lord Irwin, P.C., K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.

and others would have heard nothing but ill-repute concerning it.

One of the instructors at Netheravon was Major Barnes.<sup>1</sup> From this meeting developed a friendship which has lasted until to-day, and took us later on a most interesting shooting trip together in Northern Rhodesia. Reggie Barnes was an ideal instructor for young officers. He had fought in the South African War, had been Military Secretary to Lord Kitchener, and had accompanied Mr. Churchill to the Cuban campaign, where they both went as spectators. He was a very keen soldier, and a clear and patient teacher; but he did not allow great personal charm and *joie de vivre* to obscure his duty of maintaining discipline.

During the course we had a Mess Night, to which the landowners and farmers of the neighbourhood were invited; the idea, was, I think, to make some return to them for their kindness in allowing a pack of harriers, maintained by the garrison on Salisbury Plain, to hunt over their land. So far as I can remember, the Mess of each mounted unit on the plain used, in those days, to entertain in this way, once or twice a year, the landowners and farmers in its immediate neighbourhood.

We had a cheery and amusing dinner, but, so far as the hosts were concerned, a perfectly sober one; the days had long passed when drunkenness was tolerated in any well-conducted Mess. However, following an ancient and proper custom, the port was sent round the table half-a-dozen times or more; most of the hosts and guests merely passed it on. Not so a certain ecclesiastic present, who drank a full glass, and sometimes

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Major-General Sir Reginald Barnes, K.C.B., D.S.O.

two, each time the wine reached him. For some time this appeared to have no effect on him; then suddenly he rose to his feet, and rapped on the table for silence; pointing to the officers on his right and left he said, with a bow, "I do not know either of you gentlemen well, but you have good, open, honest, English faces. But you, Sir," he said in a voice of thunder to a most respectable middle-aged King's Messenger, who was one of our number, "have the bearing and appearance of a criminal."

Both the victim and the Commanding Officer treated the incident as a joke, and we managed to shepherd our erratic guest into the ante-room. Here, however, he became so unsteady and aggressive that it was necessary to have him driven home in the mess cart.

There were two other "after dinner" incidents that year which remain in my memory. One occurred in my own regiment. The last night in camp in every Yeomanry regiment was always regarded as an especially licensed occasion for "ragging" in both the officers' and men's lines. In the camp in question I was Orderly Officer on the last day. I was returning with the Sergeant of the Guard and a picket after closing the canteen; this was a task which required some tact, since the inmates were hilariously happy, and many of them, being constituents of mine and farmers over whose land I hunted, were more willing to give me three cheers or stand me a drink than to remember. I was an officer, and that they were private soldiers. As I was walking away I saw to my amazement a number of yeomen and civilian servants and grooms running away from the officers' lines, pursued by someone in pyjamas with a revolver in his hand. I shouted to him to stop, and found he was a popular, but excitable brother-officer, one D——

(long since dead, alas !), who assured me that a mutiny had just started. I subsequently found that "the mutiny" had consisted of a foolish escapade by the people whom I had seen running away; they had cut the ropes of D.'s tent while he was asleep. I calmed him down, and he spent the rest of the night in the mess tent, without his revolver.

The other incident happened on a yacht belonging to a friend of mine on which I was staying for Goodwood, and on which I went later to Ostend to try, in my youthful foolishness, to retrieve a bad week on the Turf by a coup in the Casino. Two naval officers, bearing distinguished names, and one at least of whom was of some seniority, came to dinner. So much did they enjoy it that afterwards they insisted on climbing the rigging and giving a recitation from the mast-head. When they left in their pinnace they stood arm-in-arm singing "*'Tis a most distressful country.*" I was greatly impressed by the disciplined immobility of the faces of the coxswain and crew whilst this went on.

To a keen amateur soldier, like myself, the period of attachment to the staffs of Lord Methuen and Sir John French, respectively, was of absorbing interest. Both were exceedingly kind to me. The former has always been a man of iron constitution, and it was his practice during Brigade training to be out with the cavalry by day and with the infantry, who took part largely in night operations, by night. For several days we got little or no sleep, and I was to experience a foretaste of that utter exhaustion of which I was to feel the full effects later with the Camel Corps in Palestine and with Lawrence in Arabia. On one such occasion, I was walking in pitch darkness over the downs, when he called my attention to two small pinheads of light ahead, and asked me what I

thought they were. Too utterly tired to take much interest in anything, I said sleepily, "I think they are glow-worms, Sir." "Glow-worms!" said the General. "Don't you know a fire when you see one? Some unit, contrary to Divisional orders, has lit a small fire, probably to cook themselves cocoa or something. The fires are about a mile away. Walk over there and find out what unit it is." This sounds a trivial incident, but it taught me a lesson which stood me in good stead in the days after August 4th, 1914. I met many distinguished officers during these manœuvres—H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, Sir Julian Byng,<sup>1</sup> Sir Robert Baden-Powell,<sup>2</sup> and others, including a number of foreign military Attachés.

In the autumn of 1906 I experienced for the first time the pleasure of attending a Newmarket October Meeting in fine, bright weather. I stayed with the late Mr. Larnach, met a lot of the grave and reverend seniors of the Turf, and had a good meeting financially. Returning on the last day on the special train, I went straight to the House, where the Committee Stage of the Plural Voting Bill was in progress. The proceedings were typical of the stormy and tempestuous debates of the time. I rose to speak soon after my arrival, and having dined on the train without injury in the midst of professional backers and others commonly known as the "boys" (a very tough lot in those days), I was in no mood to be intimidated by the verbal attacks of Socialists and Radicals. Being greeted with jeers and ironical cheers, which was my invariable experience in those days, I said, "Honour-

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Viscount Byng of Vimy, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., M.V.O.

<sup>2</sup> Now (1932) Lord Baden-Powell, G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., K.C.B.



able Members belonging to the Radical and Socialist Party needn't think they can bully me, as they do non-unionist miners."

I have been in the House practically throughout the Parliamentary life-time of the Socialist Party, and I have observed that the members of it have never changed in one respect. Certain references drive all of them, even the most staid and respectable, to almost maniacal fury—which is all the more amazing as in private life so many of them are mild, genial and most friendly to their opponents. So it was with this mention of non-unionists. They shouted and gesticulated, and I heard the usual cries, "And you call yourself the Gentlemanly Party! If that's what the Public Schools do, I thank God I wasn't at one," etc., etc.

A little later Sir Edward Carson<sup>1</sup> rose to speak. Previously he had described the Bill as a "sneak Bill." He was assailed with cries of "Sneak! sneak!" The late Lord Harcourt, in reference to Sir Edward's speech, said, "We had too many criminal lawyers," a *double entendre* which was the cause of prolonged cheers and counter-cheers.

The greatest uproar, however, was caused by the first words of a speech by the late Mr. Paul. Much controversy had arisen earlier in the year concerning the decision in an Election Petition over the hearing of which the late Mr. Justice Grantham presided. Accusations of partiality had been made against him by Liberals. Mr. Paul began, "Not even Mr. Justice Grantham——" He got no further. The Tory party yelled at him to withdraw, and at last the Chairman directed him to do so, as a result of a Point of Order by me. These incidents may

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Lord Carson, P.C.

be worth recalling for the benefit of Parliamentarians of a later age, some of whom bewail the alleged "degeneracy" of Parliament as evidenced by scenes. No, Parliamentary manners have certainly not deteriorated since the War. It would be impossible.

In November 1906 I sailed for New York in the S.S. *Baltic*. My lifelong friend, Mr. Harold Pearson,<sup>1</sup> had invited me to accompany him and his wife to Mexico, whither he was going with the late Lord and Lady Cowdray.

We had a stormy voyage, but the *Baltic*, then one of the largest, if not the largest of the Transatlantic ships, was very steady, and the huge seas, which were bigger and more formidable than I, with my limited experience, believed to be possible, made little difference to her.

I spent some days in New York, and then some in Philadelphia. I was interviewed in the usual fashion, and the result, also in accordance with custom, bore no sort of relation to what I had said or done at the interviews. I enjoyed, in full measure, the boundless hospitality and generosity of Americans, and felt, as every person who is "alive" must do when he or she goes for the first time to New York, a sense of excitement and exhilaration in the mental and physical atmosphere.

My experiences were varied. The serious ones included an interview with the Mayor of New York, a visit to a great newspaper office (over which I was conducted by one of the journalists who had interviewed me), a visit to Pennsylvania University at Philadelphia, and a trip in a pair-horse phaeton to a model farm outside the latter town. The less serious ones ranged from lunch in a fashionable Fifth Avenue house to attendance, as a

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Viscount Cowdray.

spectator, at a twenty-four-hour bicycle race in Madison Square Garden, and afterwards at an all-night supper-party at Rector's (then a famous Bohemian restaurant on Broadway), where a prominent New Yorker was entertaining the leading ladies, as well as members of the chorus, of all the musical comedies running in New York. These latter were described to me by an enthusiastic male guest as "Peaches from Peachville." They were certainly very pretty, and most of them full of typical Broadway humour as well. Rector's was an amusing place, and the proprietor, George Rector, a real character. If parties there were not as uproarious as rumour says that they are in New York speakeasies since the era of Prohibition, there was sufficient snap about them to make me glad I had come to "little Old New York" while still in my early twenties and able to enjoy that sort of thing.

So many first impressions of the United States have been given by visiting foreigners that the subject has become tedious to a degree. But the journey which we made by rail from Philadelphia to Mexico City merits a reference. It started in some discomfort in a Pullman, overheated (as American Pullmans always seem to be to an Englishman), and crowded. There were twenty degrees of frost when we left Philadelphia, and at Indianapolis there was not only half-melted snow in the dirty streets under-foot, but fog and low-hanging clouds overhead. Though I have roughed it in peace and war in mountain, swamp and desert, I think I dislike more acutely than any actual privations a long railway journey in the United States or Canada in winter in a superheated, ill-ventilated Pullman, with dirty slush or snow all round the train at every stopping-place. One feels physically

and mentally irritated and despondent ! I have no feeling against the Transatlantic Pullman car system in itself. Indeed, the comfort of the bunks, the cleanliness and excellence of the food, the camaraderie of the smoking-room, and the efficiency of the coloured attendants appeal to me. In summer the frequent halts of ten to fifteen minutes which the long-distance trains make give one a chance of exercise and diversion. But in mid-winter in the north of the continent, I repeat that traveling is horrible. However, on this particular journey everything was pleasurable and comfortable from St. Louis, for here we entered a private car, and next day woke to find ourselves, in brilliant sunshine and weather like that of the Riviera at its best, at Little Rock, Arkansas. Indeed, the contrast in climate between what we had left twenty-four hours before and what we had reached was exactly that which one experiences when one goes from London to Nice or Cannes in December. It is difficult to exaggerate the diversity of the scenery on the railroad route from Arkansas to Mexico City. You see (or rather saw, since I believe most of them have been cut down in recent years) the vast forests of oak, birch and pine in Arkansas. Then you pass through the absolutely flat good lands of Texas, with their rich black "cotton soil," and their huge fields with hardly a tree in sight, save a few evergreen oaks. Later you reach the canyons and palms of the Rio Grande country, with its brick-red soil. After passing the Mexican frontier, you climb on to the great sandy, stony, sterile plateau. Its rugged ravines and isolated hills are very like the South African kopjes. There, too, you see churches and houses more than a couple of centuries old, and can hardly believe that you are in the same continent as the Great Republic

which you have left. And then the majesty of Popocatepetl comes into view.

On such a journey you see also great contrasts between the men and women of one locality and another. Not only are there the obvious differences between those north and south of the Mexican border, but there is also a difference in physical type among "hundred per cent. Americans" in, say, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Arkansas and Texas, which, at least in the country districts, seems to be attributable less to racial origin than to the influence of climate and latitude.

## CHAPTER IV

Mexico and the Mexicans—President Diaz—Señor Limantour—Cuernavaca—The land of insects—Tehuantepec—The trans-oceanic railway—Tampico—“*La Machiche*”—A trip into the wilds—Vera Cruz—March in England.

By assiduous labour, tact, supreme efficiency and complete integrity, the late Sir Weetman Pearson<sup>1</sup> and his firm, S. Pearson & Son, had come to occupy a unique position in Mexico during the latter part of the Diaz régime. Responsible Mexicans highly appreciated, not only the great contract works which the firm carried out, but also Sir Weetman's experience and advice as a participant with Mexicans in other business enterprises in Mexico.

Owing to their remoteness from the main activities of the British Empire and their proximity to the United States, Mexicans were, and are, liable to be ignorant of the greatness and resources of the British Empire. It is no exaggeration to say that Sir Weetman immensely enhanced the prestige of his country in Mexico.

As his guest I was enabled to meet a number of most interesting men. First, there was President Porfirio Diaz himself. With piercing eyes, and a fine leonine head, crowned with a magnificent crop of white, shaggy hair, he looked what he was—a man of iron resolution and physique, harsh and ruthless, but, on the whole, just. The proof of his capacity lies in the fact that,

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Viscount Cowdray.

during his Presidency, or, to call it by a more accurate term, his dictatorship, Mexico enjoyed settled government and peace for the first time in her history as an independent State. He was happily married to a wife whose dignity and charm in private life matched his.

The President was fortunate in his Finance Minister, Señor Limantour. He was not only by far the best and most successful Finance Minister in South or Central America at the time, but was also superior to many European Ministers occupying a similar position. One very delightful friendship which I made on this trip was with the late Don Guillermo de Landa, the Governor of Mexico City and the Federal District. He and his wife and young family had the true instinct of making a guest at home, and I spent a few days very happily on his hacienda. Like so many Mexicans of wealth and position, he had to flee the country after the downfall of the Diaz régime. Subsequently his son and one of his daughters married into British families.

I stayed some time in Mexico City. Outwardly, at any rate, it was a civilised and well-run town in those days. In the residential part the streets were wide and well-paved, strikingly so in contrast to the pot-holes and cavities in the streets of most cities of the United States at the time. Neither the architecture nor the material (almost invariably white stone) of the new and imposing houses in the local "Fifth Avenue" clashed with the many fine buildings of an earlier age in the older and business quarters. The town was full of lovely gardens and open spaces, and the streets of contrasts. Electric trolley-cars and motors (in fair quantities even in those days) made their way through strings of donkeys and pack-mules, and gaily caparisoned

equestrians galloped recklessly down the main streets on heavily embossed saddles which looked as if they had been in use during the time of Charles V. Excellent order was maintained in the streets, and the drainage system of the town was good and modern. There were fine shops, a luxurious and exclusive Club, a polo-ground, a race-course, a glorious public park at Chapultepec, as well as many amusements and forms of entertainment, both those of a kind considered legitimate in Nordic countries and others.

It was only when I left this Central American Paris and its neighbourhood for the country outside that I realised how much there was in the land of crudity and of brutishness, so soon afterwards to be displayed to all the world; though the extraordinary savagery of the crowd at the first (and last) bull-fight which I ever attended gave me some insight into national characteristics, as did a utensil labelled *vomitario* at one of the principal restaurants of the capital. The curse of Mexico was (and I believe still is) the fierce spirit known as *pulque*, which is obtained from a species of cactus.

But one can forgive Mexico much because of the charm and intelligence of the best of its people, and the unforgettable beauty and variety of its scenery.

I had many opportunities of sampling the latter. Once, accompanied by a *rurale* (or mounted policeman) as escort, I had a two days' ride over the hills to Cuernavaca.

At the highest point of the mountains which separate this ancient town from Mexico City is a desolate, sandy plateau on which nothing but tussocky, yellow grass and dwarf pines grow, but as one makes the long descent into Cuernavaca one sees four separate and distinct



varieties of vegetation : on top the pines, then olives, below again palms, and lowest of all the rich tropical luxuriance of the plain on which the town stands. These vast and almost illimitable vistas, and the astonishing contrast of scenery due to the changes in altitude, are a feature of Mexico. There is a point on the railroad that goes from the capital to the Atlantic coast where you can literally see three " climates " : the first that of the vast tableland, with its comparatively limited rainfall, warm days and cold nights, on which the city of Mexico stands (the town stands as high above sea-level as is the top of Mont Blanc); the second that approximating to the climate of Switzerland; and the third that of the steamy, unhealthy jungles, almost incredibly thick, and matted with creepers, of the coastal plain—the *tierra caliente*. In all my travels in four continents I have only once found this particular view equalled, and that is by what one sees going down the mountain railway from Simla to Kalka.

My trip to Cuernavaca was full of incident. Both our arrival at, and departure from, the pleasant old town were watched with thrilled interest by parties of American tourists. I am not sure if they thought I was a prisoner on his way to gaol or a grandee of old Spain. Certainly the *rurale* and his saddlery were picturesque enough. He was also a man of firmness and intelligence. We spent one night in a filthy inn in a tiny and dirty hamlet in the hills. The evil-looking Chinaman who owned the inn looked, and probably was, a murderer. The *rurale* stored all our saddlery and belongings in my room, and never had his rifle out of his hands. The innkeeper wished him to sleep in a loft over the stable, but he replied grimly that he was there to guard me

against robbery and murder, and would sleep in his blankets on the floor across the door of my room, which he did. Being in those days an inexperienced traveller, I foolishly tried to sleep on the mattress provided by the "inn." I had hardly been in bed a moment before I was itching all over. I struck a match, lit a candle, and began searching in a Spanish-English phrase-book, which I carried, in order to find words to convey to the *rurale* that I proposed to sleep in the chair; but the *rurale* understood at once. Saying "*Las pulgas ! las pulgas !*", he motioned me to get up, seized the mattress, threw it out of the window, and proceeded to make up a very passable bed for me on the box iron bedstead by means of saddles, saddle-bags, and my great-coat and blanket. We heard the rascally Chinaman moving stealthily about in the night; I am convinced that he would have tried to rob or murder any unarmed visitor.

Of all the countries I have visited I think Mexico has the most insects. Not only are there what I may call the ordinary domestic varieties, but virulent mosquitoes in the *tierra caliente* (conveyors of malaria and yellow fever), sandflies, also causing fever, and most horrible ticks found in thick vegetation, which are called *pinu-lilla*; these animals burrow into one's skin, and if not removed cause sores which may easily lead to blood-poisoning. They nearly did so in my case.

I spent one or two other uncomfortable nights in Mexico. I passed the greater part of one sultry night in the *tierra caliente* sleeping on the floor of the caboose of a freighter (guards-van of a goods train), as I was in a hurry to get to the capital after a visit to the coast, and there was no passenger train available.

I spent another in a stifling wooden hut in a steamy

marsh, sleeping on a wooden bunk. My companions on this occasion were all Americans, working for the Oil Company which was then prospecting in the State of Tamaulipas. They looked and were pretty tough, though honest and good-natured withal. They played a noisy game of poker for most of the night within three feet of where I was lying. But I was so tired that I went off to sleep directly I lay down, undisturbed by the mixed sounds of almost constant expectoration and profanity around me. These oil-workers were of the type who swear so constantly that their language becomes meaningless and, consequently innocuous.

During my stay in Mexico I witnessed a most interesting ceremony—the opening of the Tehuantepec railway. This railway connects Salina Cruz on the Pacific with Coatzacoalcos (now called Puerto Mexico) on the Atlantic, and crosses the American continent at what is, I believe, its narrowest point. It was built by the late Lord Cowdray's firm in conjunction with the Mexican Government. For the opening ceremony a number of special trains were provided, in which the guests travelled and lived for several days. They were entirely composed of private cars. I shared a car with General Rincon, a veteran of the Franco-Mexican War, with vivid recollections of the unhappy Maximilian and his times, Señor Mendez, a director of the National Railroad of Mexico, Don José Landa and Señor Carlos Landa. They proved to be delightful companions. We were in a car which came from the United States. At sundown on the first day the coloured porter, "Uncle," as they call his profession in the United States, pulled down the blinds of our saloon. "Why do you do that?" said one of the Mexican gentlemen. "In case

some rough-neck was to see them lights, and let off his gun at us," said the porter. "Nonsense!" said my Mexican friend, "these things may happen in the United States; they don't occur in Mexico." Alas! my poor friend didn't foresee the future of his unhappy country.

President Diaz came on this trip to open the railway officially, and he was accompanied by the Ministers of all the Foreign Powers. Among them was the German Baron von Wangenheim, who will be remembered as German Ambassador in Turkey during the War. He was of a dour type—a Prussian, I think—but his wife was beautiful and intelligent. The trip was of absorbing interest to me, and I greatly admired not only the construction of the railway and the ports, but also the efficiency of all the arrangements. I saw the Pacific for the first time, and bathed in it despite gloomy tales about sharks.

The comic-opera element which is inseparable from functions in South or Central America obtruded itself at least once on this occasion. At the town of Tehuantepec there was a dance given in honour of the President. In those days the town was almost exclusively inhabited by the Tehuana tribe of pure-blood Indians—that is to say, the indigenous inhabitants. They were said to be superior in honesty and some moral qualities to the ordinary Mexican, who is usually of very mixed descent.

Almost all the ladies were native Tehuanas, belonging to the highest society in the place. They wore bright-coloured velvet shirts, embroidered with gold, very full at the bottom, and bodices shaped rather like a runner's vest. On their heads were enormous white caps, resembling those worn by French *bonnes*; all of them had necklaces and ornaments of gold.

The male guests consisted almost exclusively of the men of the train-party, who (from the President downwards, who danced like a two-year-old) entered into the proceedings with great zest. An edict had gone forth that we might dress as we liked and, consequently, some wore dress-clothes with opera hats and white waistcoats, some wore dinner-coats, some ordinary morning clothes, some white ducks and some tweed suits. The effect was worth going a long way to see, especially the gathering of the dancers before the arrival of the President. A number of perspiring elderly gentlemen (most of them married, and belonging to the diplomatic service) paraded round the square in every variety of costume, each with an Indian lady on his arm, who listened without any emotion to the nice things which he said to her.

A brilliant moon looked down on a scene which would not have been out of place in a musical comedy. The ball was held in a room with big doors wide open and a gallery all round. In this gallery, on the steps, and in the street, clustered a huge crowd of gate-crashers, who were kept back by a number of policemen who were stolidity and dignity personified; also, from the way that they passed on from one police constable to another, until finally he or she was turned out, any man, woman or child who tried to break their ranks, they might have belonged to the "A" Division.

The feeling of actually living and acting in a musical comedy which I experienced on this occasion was even stronger at a later period during my visit to Mexico, when I went to Tampico.

After the Tehuantepec trip I stayed for some days with the chief engineer of the port works at Coatzaco-

coalcos, a most hospitable man, in the hope of catching a tarpon; I failed to do so, though I saw several and caught one or two other big sea-fish of those parts. Consequently, a fortnight or so later, after a farewell visit to Mexico City, I went to Tampico, the best place for tarpon-fishing. The oil boom in this town, and in the state of Tamaulipas, in which it stands, had not then started, though prospecting was going on for oil by Lord Cowdray's Mexican Eagle Oil organisation.

To judge from recent American novels and books of travel, Tampico, now the centre of the oil-field, is to-day as great a sink of iniquity as any place in the world. It would not be fair thus to describe it in 1907, but it was tough enough in all conscience, and came nearer to a Bret Harte description of a mining town in the 'forties than I imagined could be possible.

There was considerable ill-feeling between the citizens of the United States, who are known in Mexico by the opprobrious term of "gringos," and the Mexicans, who were called by the Americans by the even less complimentary name of "greasers." As the wilder spirits of both communities packed a gun, a shooting fight was by no means uncommon. Both the British Consul and his United States colleague warned their respective fellow-countrymen against going out at night save in the main thoroughfares. The only hotel worthy of the name charged exorbitant rates for a bare and uncomfortable bedroom and almost uneatable food. In the lounge, or lobby as it is called in the United States, one was liable to find a drunken man at any time of the day or night, and it was advisable to give him a wide berth in view of the possibility of his being armed.

But, nevertheless, there were some very kind and

friendly people in Tampico, among them the representatives of the State and the town, respectively, the Jefe Político, and the Mayor. I had letters of introduction to both, and they were determined to make my stay enjoyable. I saw them every evening; indeed, it was impossible to avoid them, as I had my dinner at the Café Perroquía, a restaurant in the Plaza, and they invariably arrived there on their nightly round of the principal bars of the town. They always insisted on my accompanying them on part of their journey, and would never allow me to pay for a drink. As they were usually not in a condition to give close attention to anything, I generally managed to avoid doing more than sip the sweet champagne and fiery cocktails which they gave me. I had several adventures in their company. Once, at a club to which they introduced me, a fierce dispute arose between them as to how I should be described in the "profession" column. One said, as a "*deputado*," but the other objected that "*Deputado no importa en Mexico.*" Finally, it was decided to write me down as "*Un Lord.*"

On another occasion, when they were in a more than usually exhilarated state, they pressed me to accompany them to the "red-light" district. This I firmly refused to do, but consented instead to go to a ball which all the leading citizens and their wives were, they informed me, attending, as this seemed a more fitting entertainment for a British Member of Parliament. To show their solicitude for me, and to make their progress less dangerous, each official took one of my arms in his, and thus, three abreast, we slowly and majestically advanced in the brilliant tropical moonlight down the main street. The Jefe was in uniform, the Mayor in civilian clothes.

At intervals we met a soldier or some citizen of the town, who saluted my distinguished companions. Then the procession halted, and the twin representatives of City and State with difficulty, but great dignity, raised their hands to their heads.

The ball was held in a room nearly as crowded as a fashionable dance restaurant after supper to-day; however, when "*La Machiche*" was being played the dancing couples didn't confine themselves to the hall; they danced right out on to the plaza. In those days there was a "*La Machiche*" tune which was familiar all over the world. I heard it afterwards in London, Montmartre and half a dozen other places, and always it brought back to me the scene in Tampico.

The band, pale, wild and dishevelled, putting every ounce of energy into the seductive and exotic tune; the boys and girls, men and women, dancing with real grace and skill in the crowded room, in and out of the chairs and tables and shrubs on the terrace, and on the square beyond, under the big palms; the jostling crowd of half a dozen nationalities round the bar, some with a curious bulge in their hip pockets, and all demanding drinks at a speed with which the perspiring waiters were unable to cope. And, to complete the unreality of the scene, there were my two worthy, but alcoholic friends, still leaning heavily on my arm, smiling benignly on all and sundry, and bowing their acknowledgments to the "*vivas*" which greeted them. I left early to go to bed, but when I set forth on my day's tarpon-fishing next morning at five a.m. the last revellers were only just leaving the hall.

At first I hooked several tarpon, but lost them, and had been fishing two or three days before I caught one



—a ninety-pound fish. Tarpon are great fighters, and to my mind, though I do not pretend to be an expert, give as much sport as a salmon. There is, however, a contrary opinion to the effect that but for their greater size tarpon could not be compared in gameness to a salmon. Tarpon are very beautiful fish, and look lovely when jumping in the river or sea in bright sunlight.

As I have already mentioned in this chapter, I had some experience of an oil-camp during my stay in the State of Tamaulipas. By Lord Cowdray's kindness, I was enabled also to go out into the country with one of his prospectors. The latter and I rode out one hot afternoon from Tamiahua, on the river, to a farm near Tamapache, where he had his headquarters. We had an American with us, as guide; his father, a Southerner, had left his native land in disgust after the Civil War, and settled in Mexico. We also had a *peon* or *mozo*, as they are called, and a baggage-mule. The way lay through thick forest and brush, interspersed with savannahs, some of them cultivated with maize and sugar. It was not unlike country which I have since seen in India and Central Africa; the small mosquitoes and gnats were a great nuisance and discomfort.

The prospector and I rode some distance ahead of the rest of the party, and foolishly lost touch with the guide. As long as it was daylight this did not matter, as the track was easy to follow, but darkness follows on sunset with amazing rapidity in those parts so near the equator. So suddenly we found ourselves alone, apparently off the track, and without the faintest knowledge in which direction to go, with inky blackness all round us. I was very tired, as I had been riding for four hours in blazing tropical sunshine, and before that travelling

for five hours in a launch, without any shade, on the river. And we were completely bushed. Twice, later in life, I have lost my way in the wilds, and on each occasion I have felt, as a result of physical fatigue, almost incapable of fighting the frightful combination of doubt and loneliness. One of these occasions was on a shooting expedition in Northern Rhodesia; then my native servant found me almost exhausted in the bush. The other was during the War, when, after dark on the second day of the first battle of Gaza, the order came for the British force to retire. The Brigade to which I belonged was on the right of the whole line (with nothing on its right flank but plain and desert, full of small parties of vampire Bedawin waiting to rob the dead and wounded), and the half-battalion which I was commanding was on the extreme right of the Brigade line. At night complete silence, darkness and mist succeeded a day of battle, din and blazing sunshine. In supervising the retirement of my unit, I lost touch with the rear-guard with which I intended to march. For twenty minutes or half an hour I wandered about completely lost, and not knowing whether I might not find myself walking into the Turkish lines at any moment. Fortunately, a brother-officer, who was sent out to look for me, managed at last to find me.

On this occasion in Mexico my companion and I at length stumbled, more by accident than design, on an Indian's hut. As, however, the owner merely replied "*Quien sabe?*" to every question put to him in regard to the direction of our goal—the farmhouse to which we were bound—he did not help us much. But at last our anxious guide appeared on the scene, having been searching far and wide for us.

The farm, which grew chiefly sugar, belonged to a delightful old Indian lady of great hospitality, but somewhat forbidding habits, such as that of almost perpetual expectoration. The house had two or three small rooms with wattle-and-daub walls and mud floors. I occupied one, which I subsequently discovered was the parlour or drawing-room. I found this out because while I was having a wash in a rubber bath which I carried with me, the good lady was heard to exclaim, "Having a bath in the drawing-room! It is most unusual!"

I made great friends with my hostess' grandchild of five years old. I showed him an English illustrated paper one day. He was bored alike by the pictures of events and the comic pictures. Then we came to a "portrait study" of a leader of the then "smart set." She was the sort of woman to whom her friends said, "*Darling*, you are looking *too* divine to-day!" When my small Indian friend saw her in the picture he burst into fits of laughter. To him she clearly appeared a sort of super-clown. I tremble to think what would have happened if the child had seen some of the "boy dowagers" of the present day, whose portraits adorn the pages of the society weeklies. I think he would have had hysterics or broken a rib.

I sailed from Tampico for home in the latter part of February on a Hamburg-Amerika liner. We stopped at the ancient and historic port of Vera Cruz. In those days, some of the old buildings still bore marks of cannonades from hostile fleets in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. We also called at Havana, but, alas! were not allowed to land, as we were in quarantine, there having been yellow fever in Vera Cruz.

Our other port of call before reaching Plymouth was

Santander in Spain. But my chief recollections of the journey are of the vast quantities of beer consumed by the German passengers, and the very friendly and genial captain.

I reached England in the middle of March. There is a type of sybaritic Englishman and Englishwoman who shudders at the thought of returning to Great Britain from a warm climate in that month. If one is returning to London, I agree with their objections. But in the country, and especially in Sussex and other southern counties, there are days in March which I wouldn't exchange for all the sparkle and dazzle of any of the sunwashed tropics in which I have been; days of complete stillness—blue mist on the horizon and light grey clouds overhead, flecked with gold and blue from the sun and ether behind; days when the trees and under-wood have a purple look, signal of the burgeoning soon to come; days when daffodils and primroses are struggling into life; days of mildness and benignity, yet with a hint of severity behind, which is so typical of England and the English character. What a relief are such days to eyes strained by the perpetual tropical sun, nostrils sick of the perennial tropical scent, and ears tired by the buzzing and humming, night and day, of the myriad tropical insects!

## CHAPTER V

The House of Commons again—A long sitting—The Imperial Conference—Laurier and Deakin—Theatrical balls—Pre-war night life in London and Paris—Restlessness and hustle—Ostend—Dublin—Austria—Hopfreen.

I RETURNED to the House of Commons to find the Tory Party in much better heart than it had been in the previous year; our leader, "A. J. B.," had fully recovered his real form. Indeed, he recalled to the older members memories of his Fourth Party days. He would stroll into the Chamber on some afternoon devoted, perhaps, to Supplementary Estimates, when the topic and discussion alike were dull and unimpressive. He would sit, apparently aloof from all that was going on around him, bored and inattentive to a degree. A Minister would make a pompous and inadequate reply to an ingenious attempt by one of us to draw him. Slowly "A. J. B." would rise and proceed to pulverise him. The House would fill in an instant; a summons for help would be sent to the Prime Minister, who would come in hurriedly, and with obvious annoyance. He, in his turn, would reply. Probably one of the Irishmen would take a hand, and soon the fun would be fast and furious. I have sometimes in recent years, when I have been in Opposition, stifled a disloyal inclination to wish that the pre-war "A. J. B." could take the place for a few moments of our present Leader. Nevertheless, this amazing facility which Lord Balfour possessed had

its disadvantages, as I shall show in a later chapter, just as present-day leadership has its advantages.

We gave the Government little peace in this 1907 Session. Once, when it was alleged that it had broken a pledge in regard to the time of taking a measure, we fought the Army Annual Bill from 1.30 a.m. (the sitting having commenced, as usual, at 2.45 on the previous day) until 6 p.m. in the evening. Thus, the House sat for twenty-seven hours. Lord Robert Cecil,<sup>1</sup> the present Lord Londonderry, Mr. Wilfred Ashley,<sup>2</sup> the late Mr. Claude Hay, the late Mr. Rutherford, the late Sir William Bull, and a few others of us were the principal figures in this episode; Mr. Rowland Hunt, affectionately known to the House as "Boadicea," also took part in the proceedings. He had, some time before, lost his Whip for some alleged Party misdemeanour, but it had just been returned to him, a few days previously. When the Chief Whip of a Party wishes to castigate a Member of that Party, he refrains from sending him the daily instructions and information about business which are known as a "Whip."

During the sitting the late Sir William Bull, stout and rubicund, the very embodiment of his surname, acted as teller in the division with "Boadicea" Hunt. As the two advanced to the table, the inimitable Mr. Jeremiah McVeagh called out "The prodigal son, and the fatted calf!" The late Lord Haldane was in charge of this debate, and it was said at the time that, by way of relaxation, he walked to Brighton the day after it was over. If he did, he showed more courage and endurance than common-sense.

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, P.C.

<sup>2</sup> Now (1932) Lord Mount Temple, P.C.

I left the House at four in the afternoon, went by train to Horsham, where my Agent met me with a car, and proceeded to a neighbouring village to open a rifle-range. Then I went on to a political smoking concert at Crawley. After making a speech I collapsed, practically in a faint, for the first and only time in my life. I had some excuse, as I had done a lot of work on the previous day, been out of bed all night, and, save for brief intervals for food and a bath and shave, had sat continuously in the Chamber of the House itself from 1.30 a.m. to 4 p.m., speaking on practically every amendment, and moving many myself.

Several of the Government's electoral chickens came home to roost at this period. I have referred, in an earlier chapter, to the effect of the Chinese Labour agitation at the General Election of 1906, and to the subsequent debates in the new Parliament. In reply to a question in April or May 1907, Mr. Churchill, then Under-Secretary for the Colonies, admitted that over two hundred and fifty Chinese coolies, brought to work in the mines, were still in South Africa without licences, and that it might be difficult to induce them to return without compensation. The admission that these "slaves" could not be induced to leave their "slavery" without compensation was greeted by us with thunderous cheers of delight.

In fairness one must admit that in one instance our opposition was ill-directed. We damned with faint praise the Bill to create a Territorial Force. In this regard, as indeed in many others, Lord Haldane was right, and we were wrong.

An Imperial Conference was held in the spring of 1907, at which the famous and unfortunate phrase was used on behalf of the British Government that the "door was banged, barred and bolted" against Protection.

The two most prominent men from the Dominions at this Conference were Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Prime Minister of Canada, and Mr. Alfred Deakin, Prime Minister of Australia. The former, of middle height, and of striking intellectual appearance, had a reputation in Canada (as I was later to learn on my visits there) of being *au fond* hostile to the British Empire. Some of his speeches, and some of his actions, such, for instance, as his American reciprocity proposals in 1911, which proved so fatal to him electorally, undoubtedly were open to question from an Imperial standpoint, but after all he initiated a system of substantial preference for British goods in Canada, and he authorised, even if reluctantly, the despatch of Canadian troops to South Africa. In private life he had great charm and distinction. I heard him speak several times, both in London and Canada. He had about him always the air of a *grand seigneur*. Deakin was of a different type—more aggressive, and perhaps, without saying anything derogatory to Laurier, more virile. He was, I think, the finest platform speaker I have ever heard. Personally he was delightfully unaffected, unassuming and expansive. During his stay in England I met him at a week-end party at the late Lord Jersey's at Osterley, and had a long walk and talk with him in the afternoon. Osterley was a wonderful centre of political entertainment in those days. I heard Deakin and Laurier speak at a dinner which was given to them by the 1900 Club in the Albert Hall, at which Mr. Balfour was present.

I have referred before to one odd contradiction of "A. J. B.'s" nature: he was frequently as inadequate, with halting manner and apparently fumbling for words, on a big occasion, as he was word perfect and absolutely sym-



metrical in logic and argument on some lesser occasion. I once heard a cynical explanation from a close friend of his. " ' A. J. B. ' is too idle," he said, " and cares too little for what people think of him to bother to prepare a speech properly. Every big speech which he has to make suffers from lack of preparation. But he is supreme either on some petty matter or some bigger issue which suddenly arises. In the first category, of course, no preparation is needed in any event; in the second, the sudden shock and interest conquer his natural laziness, so that his unsurpassed intellect operates suddenly in all its effulgence, like switching on an electric light."

Laurier was also not at his best on this occasion, but Deakin made one of the finest speeches on the Empire which I have ever heard, not excepting those of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain. I sat in a box where, among others, was Lady Dorothy Nevill, full of memories of Disraeli.

Feeling, when the proceedings were over, that I needed more youthful company, I went for a short time to two balls at two famous West End restaurants, promoted by those who were, or who claimed to be, in the theatrical world. One of them was given by the principals of a well-known musical comedy company to the chorus of the same play.

At that time, members of the chorus were marrying with some rapidity into the peerage; consequently they could not afford to allow their conduct in public to suffer by comparison with that of debutantes in another sphere.

Among the many beautiful guests were two young ladies, afterwards to become famous; indeed, their names a few years later topped the bill whenever they appeared, and still the photographs of one or both

appear sometimes in the picture papers of two continents. At the time they were young, quite unknown to the general public, becomingly demure, and earnestly engaged in learning to speak "refained" English.

Two amusing incidents happened at one of these parties. There was present a gentleman of German extraction who moved in Bohemian circles, and was vaguely connected with the theatres. He was talking to an associate of his, often seen on the race-course, where he had a very poor reputation. He was, in fact, a tough, who would not have been out of place in that town of Tampico which I had just left.

A great friend of mine, who was one of the most fearless and delightful of men, happened accidentally to brush against these two while dancing. The tough asked him in insolent tones where he was coming to. My friend apologised, but added, "There is something, Sir, vaguely repellent about your face, and I advise you not to risk further damage to it by being unnecessarily discourteous." My friend, I should add, was a bit of an amateur boxer. The tough, forgetting his façade of respectability, his dress-clothes, and his surroundings, in which the ladies were talking in so "refained" a way and behaving with such exaggerated decorum, let fly in the language of the shilling ring. The dancing stopped, the M.C. appeared, and chuckers-out hovered in the background. The Germanic Bohemian saved the situation. "Don't fight, boys," he said, "but come and see a real fight to-morrow, or rather to-night, at the National Sporting Club, and come and dine with me first." It was the most generous invitation, and was extended to me as well. We accepted and had rather an amusing evening.

My friend and I left the ball about 4 a.m. to go to our lodgings. We went to a side door, which, compared with the main door in another street, saved us a walk of fifty to a hundred yards. To our surprise we found it locked; in front of it was an attendant, who said, "Don't go out that way, Sir, please." We asked him why the door was shut, but he refused to tell us. After some argument, and a threat on our part to complain to the manager, he let us out. Then we realised the cause of the locked door. On the steps lay a gentleman in dress clothes and an opera hat, hopelessly, and apparently speechlessly, drunk. The doorkeeper, fearing a row, and possibly inquiries from the police, had deposited the man there, hoping his condition would not be attributed to anything which had occurred inside.

My friend, who was by nature of a chivalrous disposition, said that we must get the man to his home if we could find out his address. The streets were deserted, but at last we managed to hail an aged four-wheeler with a most decrepit horse and a very ugly old driver. When, however, the latter saw the state of his proposed fare, he at first refused to take him. However, a 10s. piece put that little matter right. We then tried to lift the helpless man into the cab, the cabman refusing to lend any assistance; the attendant had shut the door of the restaurant, so that we could look for no help from that direction. We had got the man partly in when, suddenly recovering speech, he commenced to bellow like a wounded bull. The noise could be heard half-way down Piccadilly. To add to the confusion, the decrepit horse began to jump about in the shafts, and his owner shouted at the top of his voice, "Police, police!" Before we could do anything further, an

enormous overcoated policeman appeared at the double from the Piccadilly end of the street. Not, however, apparently liking to tackle single-handed what he took to be a couple of swell mobsmen, he halted some paces away and blew his whistle. A second or so later another huge cop, frantically blowing his whistle in response, appeared at the other end of the street. We were so paralysed with laughter that for a moment we were incapable of action. But when we saw the two officers converging on us I thought I had better do something, so, going up to them, and giving them my name and card, and murmuring that I was an M.P., I told them what had happened. To my infinite relief they accepted our perfectly true story, saluted, and appeared to wait for instructions.

The "drunk" had, meanwhile, sunk back into the gutter. I pointed out that he had not become disorderly until we tried to get him into the cab, and suggested that no charge should be preferred against him if we could induce him to go home. The constables agreed, and one of them walked up to the unknown and said, "You can't lie about there, you know, Sir," and lifted him into the cab, without any resistance on the latter's part. After some delay he was induced to mutter his name and address. Then, as the cab slowly moved off, he said, "Sh' quite alright, offisher; yourse good fellow. Shose other chaps are murderers. Shay tried murder me. Reshcued nick of time!" The central figure of this incident has since become fairly well known to fame.

The late Mr. Ralph Nevill and other writers have contended that the night life of London at the end of the nineteenth century was more amusing than it is

to-day, with the restaurants and clubs where one can dance or watch a cabaret. I have no personal knowledge on this point, but I can testify that not only were the forms of amusement and entertainment open to the public after ten o'clock at night infinitely less varied and extensive in the early nineteen hundreds than they are to-day, but that there were only two or three restaurants at which it was considered proper and respectable for ladies to sup. In them was no dancing. Night clubs, respectable or otherwise, were practically non-existent. Disreputable ones like the "Alsations" and the "Gardenia" had been closed a few years earlier. In addition to the restaurants referred to, there were a number of others which opened for supper, some of an amusing and semi-Bohemian, some of a rather dowdy and humble character. The first were frequented by actors and actresses, journalists, "men about town," etc., the second by business people and their wives; to neither did "ladies in society" go.

In a different category from the smart and "proper," artistic, Bohemian, and dowdy resorts to which I have referred, were certain music-halls and one famous hotel, now demolished. To them went the *jeunesse dorée* when anxious for a little change from the female society of cousins or sisters, or even after a surfeit of the "refained" society of the musical-comedy chorus.

I am not concerned to argue whether the sad and perennial problem of the "social evil" is best treated by tolerating a breach of the law, or by driving women of the "unfortunate" class on to the streets. This question excites a perpetual controversy. What is clear is that both the particular music-halls and the hotel in question deliberately broke the provision of the law,

which declares it to be an offence to allow licensed premises to be "the habitual resort of prostitutes." They did it also under the very eyes of the police, who must have had instructions from higher authority not to take cognisance of what was going on. The sequel, in the case of the hotel, was astonishing; after many years of defying the law with impunity, the proprietor was summoned on the information, so far as I can recollect, of a dignitary of the Church, living in the neighbourhood, who had complained of the scandal. The owner was convicted, and the hotel lost its licence. Immediately articles appeared in the Press recording satisfaction at the punishment inflicted and astonishment that such a state of affairs as the case disclosed could exist in London. Yet the writers of the articles had known perfectly well for years, as did nine-tenths of the residents in the West End of London, that the management of the hotel was allowing exactly what was described in court. The same fatuous expressions of astonishment came from some quarters when, as a result of the action of the military authorities, the lounges of the music-halls were closed early in the War. "Fancy," said these humbugs, "that such things should have existed without the public realising it!"

Englishmen who have never travelled, and who are unfamiliar with any type of reasoning other than the somewhat muddled one so generally prevalent in this nation, often ask pathetically why foreigners frequently consider us to be hypocrites. A state of affairs such as that which I have described affords a partial answer.

Night-life in Paris before the War was more amusing than, to judge from all accounts, it is to-day. At any rate, it was less unpleasantly commercialised and less

obtrusively cosmopolitan. At some of the small restaurants in the Rue Pigalle, or the Boulevard Clichy, under the illuminated signs of "*dîner, souper, ouvert toute la nuit*," there were still a few genuine Parisians to be seen among the guests and those who sang or danced. In one evening I saw and heard Polaire, the Englishman Fragon, and others. Fragon, with his inimitable songs, such as "*Le gamin de Paris*," was a genius.

Paris, before the War, still had its exclusive restaurants without orchestras, with exquisite food, drink and service, such as Larue (still in existence, but fallen somewhat from its high estate), or Durand's on the Boulevard and Paillard's at the corner of the Chaussée d'Antin—both now no more. Voisin's, which only closed last year, was perhaps most famous for its marvellous cellar—valued at several million gold francs a few years before the War. Braquessac, the owner, was a great character, and ran a racing stable; I often talked sport with him when he came round to the tables with his flowing *La Vallière* tie. He was the embodiment of the old-fashioned *maître d'hôtel*, in the classical sense of the term.

Sports and games have almost extinguished the type of comic Frenchman which *Punch* in the 'seventies and 'eighties loved to depict. But he existed in the early nineteen hundreds among the older men. I remember once in 1907, when I was on a short visit to Paris, I had been dining with my friend Mr. Evelyn Wrench,<sup>1</sup> then on the staff of the *Paris Daily Mail*. As we emerged from, I think, Larue's, we saw a small crowd on the pavement surrounding two fat, under-sized, middle-aged, and very respectable-looking citizens. They wore hats and coats of the type afterwards to be immortalised

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Sir Evelyn Wrench, C.M.G.

by Mr. Charles Chaplin. They were evidently friends who had quarrelled, and were engaged in furious and gesticulatory recriminations. Their rage was of a kind that in Italy and Spain would probably have ended in a knife-thrust, and in England in a real fist-fight. The *dénouement* in this case was more peaceful, but as dramatic. One of the fat little men suddenly said, "*Eh bien, voilà mon vieux,*" and at the same time slapped the face of his friend with his open palm. The blow was not hard enough to kill a fly. But it had its effect. The "slapped one" burst into tears, and, with shoulders heaving with his sobs, walked slowly away. The "slapper" shrugged his shoulders and got into a passing cab. I felt that he must indeed have been labouring under strong emotion to do anything so extravagant.

During the spring and summer of 1907 I did a certain amount of amateur journalism, writing for the *Evening News* and the *Saturday Review*. I started on what may be called blackleg journalism by writing an article for the *National Review* about Eton just after I had ceased to be an Eton boy, and, except during the War, and when in office, I have been writing for newspapers and reviews ever since.

I also played in a polo-team that summer with Mr. Vernon Willey,<sup>1</sup> the late Lord Helmsley and Lord Leitrim. We called ourselves the "Oxford Rovers," and worked hard to win matches, but with conspicuous ill-success. I also used to play polo with the long-defunct House of Commons Polo Club at Wembley. Play took place twice a week at nine in the morning on hireling ponies, belonging to Messrs. Withers. As these ponies had to provide mounts for players of the

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Lord Barnby, C.M.G., M.V.O., C.B.E.



Foreign Office Polo Club on two other mornings, I should think they were glad when Sunday came round. The late Mr. George Wyndham, the late Lord Valentia and Mr. Winston Churchill were prominent members of the Club.

I had a painful experience that summer in a match against the Irish Guards on the Southfields Ground, then belonging to the Brigade of Guards. A pony of mine called "Maggie Murphy" dropped dead as I was galloping out from goal. She was not distressed at all—indeed, it was at the beginning of a "chukka." Probably her heart was weak. I was lucky to escape with a shaking.

I was a guest at innumerable dinners and dances during the London season, as was natural for a young bachelor M.P., but none of them calls for any special mention, though often I met very interesting people. For instance, at one of the former I sat, when the ladies had left the room, between the late Lords Fisher and Milner.

In June 1907 I spent a delightful week-end with the late Sir William Anson, the Warden of All Souls, at Oxford. Formerly Minister of Education, and at that time Member of Parliament for the University, he had immense charm and sense of humour. I dined in Hall on the Sunday evening in company with the late Lord Birkenhead, Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland, Mr. Amery and others.

The New College men in the House of Commons entertained the late Canon Spooner—"The Spoo"—to dinner that summer. Unfortunately, he was distressingly free from Spoonerisms, but he was clearly very pleased to be with us, and touched by the deep affection

which he inspired in us, as in all former members of the College.

There is a prevalent impression in some quarters that restlessness and hustle are post-war products. Some of us, who were young before 1914, managed, however, to crowd experience and variety into our lives as fully as do any of those in their twenties to-day. Probably, like them, our achievements, such as they were, suffered from lack of concentration and from diffusion of energy over too many fields. But, looking back over a quarter of a century, I cannot honestly say that I think our health or vitality has suffered since as a result of our activities. There is something in the notion that wear and tear is no greater enemy than rust and languor.

In the summer of 1907, in addition to the activities which I have been enumerating—journalism, polo, the London season, and the House of Commons, with its late hours and hard work for us who were the “Young Guard” of the Opposition fighters, I trained with my Yeomanry at the annual camp, and occasionally at week-ends as well. I spoke in my own constituency and a number of others. I went to Paris for a short visit in May, and spent a week-end in Belgium in July attending the Ostend polo tournament as a spectator, and visiting Brussels and the field of Waterloo as well. Ostend was an amusing place in those days—races between cabs driven by young Englishmen on their way home from the Casino being a feature of the festivities of the “big week.” The police looked leniently on this form of contest, believing, rightly, that it pleased the mad English. The streets in the older part of the town were narrow and paved, and it required some skill to negotiate a corner, at the top speed even of a *fiacre* horse. The only

time that I tried it, the horse which I was driving slipped up, but with commendable skill recovered himself before I had time to fall off the box, and was none the worse for his mishap.

Directly the Session was over in August, I went to Dublin during Horse Show week, to speak at a Unionist convention. Returning on the Holyhead night-boat, I fell in with a cheery crowd of English horse-dealers, many of whom I knew. If lies told on board a ship could sink her, the stories about horses in the smoking-room that night would have sent us to the bottom.

Thence I went to Austria to stay with my friend and constituent, the late Sir Edmund Loder, the famous rifle-shot, and the possessor of a magnificent garden and a most interesting menagerie of wild animals in Sussex. More than one variety of rhododendron which he grew is named after him. Sir Edmund rented, in those days, a property called Hopfreben, which was afterwards occupied by the German Crown Prince. Hopfreben was very inaccessible, and getting there involved a tedious train journey by mountain railway, and a long drive over rough roads. The scenery was magnificent, but the trip was marred for me by a terrible accident to a little child who was run over at a level crossing.

The drive from the station to Hopfreben was full of incident. We started in a victoria and reached the village of Schoppenau just after dark; about a mile on the farther side, on a very lonely road, the carriage suddenly stopped, and immediately two herculean men, of forbidding appearance, came out from the shadow of a pine tree, and motioned us to get down. They murmured a few words, but as I cannot understand German,

they meant nothing to me. Both my servant and I thought they were brigands, but as argument seemed useless, and physical resistance dangerous, we obeyed their orders. They seized my luggage and shouldered it as though it were composed of paper, and proceeded up the mountain side. We followed as best we could, clambering over great moss-grown boulders, and trunks of trees, embedded in deep mud; at last we came to a sort of track where a springless waggon with two horses was waiting; the driver, who spoke a little English, explained that the road had been washed away, and that our guides were not brigands, but keepers from Hopfreben. The waggon took us up an almost perpendicular mountain path. Once, to ease the horses, I got out to walk and, in the pitch darkness, fell over the side of the path and dropped fifteen or twenty feet on to a small bush. When, next day, I was shown a cross a few yards away, put up to mark the place where two of the local inhabitants had fallen down the hillside and been smashed to pieces in the valley many hundreds of feet below, I realised what an escape I had had.

The weather and visibility on the first two days that I was at Hopfreben were too bad for chamois stalking. On the third day a telegram arrived to announce my father's sudden death from heart failure.

My father was just over seventy. Since he had left Eton he had only once had a serious illness—an attack of pneumonia some eight years before his death—and save for that had scarcely ever had a day's ill-health. He was, indeed, the personification of vigour, as energetic up to the day of his death in county business (he was Chairman of the West Sussex County Council) as he was in managing his estate and prize herd of cattle.

He was an exceptionally fine shot, horseman and fisherman, and had been a good cricketer in his younger days.

I spoke in an earlier chapter of our relationship being more like that of two brothers than that of father and son. His sudden death was a terrible blow to my mother, who was, to a great extent, an invalid, and I was so dazed with misery on the journey home that I hardly knew what I was doing.

I have often thought since, that my father's death was what he himself would have chosen. He died in his sleep without pain. To a man who, in the previous winter, had hunted three days a week, and worked on county business and estate matters from morn to eve on the other three, long illness or slow decay of mental and physical powers would have been very painful. There are few sadder sights than that of a man laid aside by incurable illness or weight of years, who has spent his youth and manhood by flood and field, in heat and cold regardless of weather, loving every moment of his vigorous life, and furnished with knowledge and understanding of birds and beasts, crops and grass, flowers and trees.

I had many letters of condolence, but the best was from a friend who usually professes a certain cynicism about men and things. He said, "Your father was the greatest Christian gentleman I ever met."

## CHAPTER VI

The Jam Saheb of Nawanagar—County Cricketers at Shillinglee—The Tariff Reform League—Lord Milner—Mr. Bonar Law—Mr. Henry Chaplin—Mr. Arthur Pearson—Mr. Goulding—Christmas at Bowood—Lord Lansdowne and Lord Fitzmaurice—The beagles—Two hunts—A variety of hunting experiences—The Session of 1908—Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's death—Mr. Churchill and the Dundee bye-election—Parliamentary personalities—Mr. F. E. Smith—Mr. Samuel—Mr. Bottomley—Mr. Harold Cox—Lord Percy—Mr. Timothy Healy—King Edward's visit to Reval—The suffragettes—Dinners and balls.

AFTER my father's death in September 1907 I was occupied during the succeeding weeks in the sad and trying business of settling up his affairs and considering ways and means of paying death duties. My mother and I decided that it would be best for me to try to let my home, Shillinglee. We left there and went to live in London in November; various improvements and alterations were carried out, and next year the house was let to the Jam Saheb of Nawanagar, whom I had worshipped from afar as a small boy when he was the incomparable "Ranji" of the cricket field. As it happened, I was President of the Sussex County Cricket Club during his tenancy of Shillinglee. The Jam played for the county several times that year, though he was then past his prime as a cricketer. In July several of us connected with Sussex cricket gave him a complimentary dinner; I was in the chair, and realised for the first time our guest's charm and ability as a speaker. There was, in those days,

a very good cricket-ground at Shillinglee, and the Jam Saheb used to give cricket house-parties there. The late W. G. Grace, A. C. Maclaren, C. B. Fry, and many other famous cricketers played on this ground in 1908.

The Tariff Reformers and Tariff Reform League were very active in the autumn of 1907 during the Parliamentary recess. We were in reality fighting on two fronts, as we were attacking not only the Radical and Socialist Free Traders but also the weaker brethren in the Conservative Party who still considered Mr. Chamberlain to be their enemy and regarded with disapproval Mr. Balfour's advance towards his policy; we were very anxious to consolidate the position which we had won when the latter issued his famous "Valentine letter." To put it frankly, we were a little concerned lest "A. J. B." might recede from the attitude which he had then adopted. We assembled in force at the annual conference of the Conservative Party, held at Birmingham in November 1907, prepared to take aggressive action if Mr. Balfour disappointed us. In fact, we found nothing with which to quarrel in what he said. Another step forward had been taken on the long road towards the achievement of unity in the Conservative Party on the subject of tariffs.

I must admit, however, that our methods of elimination in the constituencies of Conservative undesirables on the Tariff issue were often severe and even brutal. We were frequently, and perhaps justly, attacked for our Tammany Hall methods. Yet we had many men on our side, other than Mr. Chamberlain, whose names are still honoured to-day. There was Lord Milner, there was Mr. Henry Chaplin,<sup>1</sup> a man of lesser intellectual attainments, but with an immense and justifiable hold on popu-

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Viscount Chaplin.

lar esteem and affection. Some, like Sir Austen Chamberlain, are still with us.

A man who rendered great service to the cause in those days, and was always most charming and helpful to young members of the League, like myself, was the late Mr. Arthur Pearson,<sup>1</sup> founder of the *Daily Express*. In later days he bore the great affliction of blindness with unflinching courage, and rendered noble service to his fellow-sufferers.

I do not suggest that the direct methods of attacking Conservative Free Traders which I have mentioned were initiated or even approved by the leaders of the movement. We younger ones did that work. But the seniors gave a splendid lead in spreading the gospel of Tariff Reform by speaking at public meetings. We were on terms of close intimacy and friendship with them, and often spoke on the same platform. For instance, Lord Milner and I, in November of the year under review, spoke to a meeting of eighteen hundred Tariff Reformers at Tunbridge Wells, and carried our resolution unanimously. It is interesting to note that at the Birmingham meeting to which I have referred, my friend, Mr. "Paddy" Goulding,<sup>2</sup> proposed a resolution in favour of old-age pensions. He was one of the keenest and most influential of all the younger Tariff Reformers, and, like the rest of us, believed that social reform and protection could, and should, go hand in hand, as they had already done in Germany.

In February 1908 the annual meeting of the Tariff Reform League was held at the Horticultural Hall. I had the honour of seconding the principal resolution,

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Sir Arthur Pearson, Bart.

<sup>2</sup> Now Lord Wargrave, P.C.



which was proposed by the late Mr. Bonar Law. In the evening the Vice-Presidents of the League entertained Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Mr. Chaplin and Mr. George Wyndham to dinner. There was immense enthusiasm at both gatherings. It was clear from the weight and substance of the support forthcoming that the hopes of the Conservative Free Traders that the Tariff Reform cause would wither, and eventually die, as a result of Mr. Chamberlain's breakdown in health were not to be realised. I remember, after the dinner, going to the *Morning Post* Office and proudly watching a leading article being printed about the day's proceedings in which my name figured prominently.

My mother and I spent Christmas at Bowood with my aunt, the late Lady Lansdowne, the late Lord Lansdowne, and his brother, Lord Fitzmaurice, then Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Much has been written elsewhere of "Uncle Clan," as Lord Lansdowne was called by his nephews and nieces. He was a charming host, full of sympathy and knowledge on all sorts of subjects, and a better conversationalist in private life than he was a speaker in public life. Indeed, on a platform, at any rate, his gifts of intellect and discernment were masked by an unimpressive manner and delivery. But always, in public and private, he was a great gentleman, exquisitely courteous and patient with all and sundry. My Christmas would have been perfect but for a stubborn attack of gastric trouble which prevented my doing justice to the superb conceptions of one of the best cooks in England—my uncle's chef, Monsieur Ferrand.

I mentioned in an earlier chapter that my father and I had a pack of beagle harriers at Shillinglee. Originally

this pack had been rabbit beagles, kept for the purpose of enabling rabbits to be hunted out of thick gorse and undergrowth and shot. Long experience has shown that in the Weald of Sussex and Kent this is the best and most humane method of keeping down the stock of rabbits. Trapping is cruel and dangerous to other animals. Neither human beaters nor spaniels will as effectively drive rabbits out of thick coverts as do beagles. When I was young, most large estates in Sussex kept packs of rabbit beagles, and in addition there were many trencher-fed packs, the property of local farmers. After pheasant and partridge shooting ceased on February 1, these packs were employed relentlessly combing out the woods and hedgerows, locally known as "rews," until April. The sport was a democratic one, since tenant farmers and, indeed, everyone in the neighbourhood who could afford to take out a gun licence took part. There are many reasons why the agricultural labourers in Sussex have always been strongly Conservative in their political views and not, as in many parts of the eastern and western counties, Liberals because their employers are Conservative. I believe that the sport of rabbit beagling, in which all classes on the land joined, with the certainty that the poorer members of the field would be given a rabbit to take home, had something to do with it.

To-day, alas! there are but few packs of rabbit beagles left. Shooting syndicates, now so common, perhaps discourage the sport, in the mistaken notion that it is bad for feathered game. Incidentally, I think it helped foxhunting, even though it disturbed a few safe finds; because farmers got used to seeing hounds running over their land, and the farmer who went shooting over beagles did not grudge the foxhunter his sport

with another kind of hound for another kind of quarry. It is a psychological fact that the farmers who seldom see hounds in their neighbourhood are the most disposed to fear possible damage to stock, crops and fences. Our beagles originally were kept for rabbit-shooting only. Then, when I was an Eton boy, my father used to hunt hares with them for my benefit in the holidays; but this, as anyone who knows anything about hare-hunting will admit, was not a satisfactory procedure, since if when we were hunting a hare we got on the line of a rabbit, our fun was over. So gradually we gave up using them for rabbits, increased their size by selective breeding, rode instead of ran with them, and at my father's death had a useful little pack of beagle harriers.

It was obviously impossible to continue to keep them at Shillinglee when the house was let and I no longer lived there. Moreover, the cost of maintaining them, though not considerable, was an item to be taken into account by anyone who had death duties to pay.

My friend Vernon Willey proposed a solution of the problem which I accepted at once. It was that the beagles should go to his home, Blyth Hall, on the borders of Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire, where there were kennels, and that we should share the management and expense. He got permission from Lord Fitzwilliam, then Master of the Grove Hounds, in whose country Blyth was, to hunt hares round Blyth, and to hunt a fox if we found one in the Isle of Axholme. This district, which is now partly devoted to coal-mining, was in those days a very isolated, but rich agricultural territory which had been reclaimed from the sea. Absence of coverts and unjumpable and unfordable dykes made the Isle of Axholme unsuitable for fox-hunting, but it was nominally

in the Grove hunting country, though "derelict." Lord Fitzwilliam, reasonably enough, stipulated that if we did find a fox in the "derelict" country, and he ran into the hunting country proper, we should stop hounds.

I sent the pack and two horses with my groom, F. Bagg, who is still in my employ, up to Blyth early in November, and a short time afterwards went up myself to stay with the late Lord Barnby at his hospitable house. Lord Barnby, though then nearly seventy (he lived to be almost ninety), went to hounds nearly as well as his hard-riding son and daughter—Miss Evelyne Willey.<sup>1</sup> The beagles were to make their *début* in their new country at a place called Haxey Bridge, near which was one of the few coverts in the "derelict" country. It was said that a fox lay there. When the morning of the Haxey Bridge meet came, I was far more excited and strung up than when I was going to make my maiden speech in the House of Commons. It was a completely strange country to me. I had never hunted a fox before, nor had the hounds, and I was not too confident that either of us would show to advantage. My anxiety was not lessened, as we motored to the meet, by observing the enormous steep-banked ditches, locally known as "drains," which divided the fields. They looked big enough to engulf a man and horse, and indeed they are. There was one hopeful factor in the situation: it was a grey, damp day, on which it seemed certain there must be a good scent.

We had to go some way to draw the solitary covert in the neighbourhood, where the fox was reported to be. It consisted of a small portion of the original unreclaimed land known locally as "moor." There were a few

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) The Honble. Mrs. Elidor Campbell.

straggling and thriftless trees, a quantity of tussocky grass and some thin underwood. I had, as I thought, finished drawing it, and was about to blow hounds out of covert, when Vernon gave a piercing holloa. He had seen a big, fat dog fox cross a ride, obviously astonished and annoyed at the wholly unexpected presence of a pack of hounds in a non-hunting country. In a moment or two hounds owned to the line, and were bustling him around the little wood. A few minutes later he was away with hounds, to my delirious delight, following in his wake on a screaming scent, looking, as the saying is, "as though a table-cloth would cover them"; indeed, one would have thought they had hunted foxes all their lives. We had quite a good hunt, but lost the fox eventually, owing to his cunning in making for a spot where a railway, a canal and a small river all met. This combination would have tried the mettle of a real pack of foxhounds and their huntsmen. It completely baffled the gallant little beagles and me. Of the five or six mounted followers on the day in question, three came to grief. Vernon, who was riding a four-year-old, slipped up when galloping through a gateway; Bagg took a heavy toss over a stile, and I managed to have a fall at a blind gap. To redeem our failure to kill the fox, we found and killed a hare later in the day.

Throughout that winter the beagles were hunted by me when I was at Blyth, and by Vernon when I was not there, with his sister whipping in. Vernon was more successful in handling the pack than I was, for the simple and shameful reason that I always funked the aforementioned dykes, and lost valuable time by trying to find a way round. Only once again did we find and hunt a fox. It was in March. I did a thing on that day

which only the very young or foolish do. I left London at 7 a.m. by express train, travelled for nearly three hours, motored to the meet, hunted hounds all day, just caught my train back to London, getting there between eight and nine, had a bath, changed and went to the House of Commons, where I made a speech and remained until one-thirty the next morning.

We had a fair hunt in the morning, and in the afternoon hounds spoke to a line of something in a rough grass field. It was a dusty, windy day in March, with a blue sky and a warm sun—the kind of day on which scenting conditions are usually bad, but when sometimes there is an astonishingly good scent up-wind. It was so on this occasion. Hounds ran well across dry ploughs, and raced along when they got on to the grass of the reclaimed land known as “carrs.” On and on we went. I suspected that we were hunting a fox, but I could not be sure, as sometimes a jack hare in March will run as straight as a fox. Consequently, though we were in the regular hunting country, I gave myself the benefit of the doubt. We made a point of four miles (and of more as hounds ran) without a check. Then they threw up in a road. Tired as the little hounds were from the dust and heat, from the distance they had come, and the pace at which they had run, they struggled valiantly over a fence into the field beyond and cast themselves, but could make nothing of it. I was just going to cast them myself, when I saw a man ploughing. I shouted to him, “Have you seen the hare?” but could not hear his reply in the wind. A very sporting farmer, a great supporter of our pack, now alas! long dead, volunteered to go and find out the news. He galloped back and, hoarse and trembling with excitement, whispered in my ear, “Cast

forrad, my Lord, it's a fox!" "No!" I said, "I can't. It would be breaking the conditions under which Lord Fitzwilliam has given us permission to hunt." "Oh! you must go on," he pleaded in agonised tones, "I'll put it right with His Lordship. Why, tha fox maun be done. Yon chaap saw him go into t'cover there"—indicating the dark patch of gorse a few fields away. "We'll kill him there for sure; he'll never get out alive." Then, seeing me shake my head, he pleaded again: "Think of it, all tha' life thou'lt have t'brush and be able to say 'Yon is the brush of a fox I killed with a pack of beagles after a grand chase.'" But I felt I must withstand the temptation, great as it was. I returned to Westminster feeling I had indeed earned the right to the title "Honourable Member"!

I had a varied experience of hunting in this season of 1907-1908. I went out with no less than nine packs of foxhounds—the Belvoir, the Badminton, the Quorn, Lord Zetland's, Lord Fitzwilliam's, Lord Leconfield's, the Crawley and Horsham, the Southdown and the Chiddingfold. Of course in some cases I had only a single day's hunting with each pack; but hunting readers will appreciate that the list includes almost every type of hunting country—good, moderate and bad. Further, during a short visit to Biarritz in February in order to recover from influenza, I had several days with the local foxhounds.

I can imagine few greater contrasts in life than that between hunting with the Biarritz pack and with the Quorn. I went out with the Quorn in their Six Hills country, perhaps the best in Great Britain, provided by a friend with both a first and second horse of true Leicestershire type. We rode over peerless grass all the time.

On my days with the Biarritz hounds I rode a French hireling through endless pine forests, while the hounds hunted, somewhat languidly, what I was credibly informed was a bagman. The pack were constantly encouraged by the huntsman with the cry, "*Ecourez-là-écoutez—'courez—'courez*," which is the French equivalent of "Hark cry, hark cry, hark." I was, however, disappointed not to hear, when the fox was viewed, the term "*il est là*"; I have always understood that "Tally-ho" is derived from this old French hunting cry.

As soon as the hunting season was over, I started playing polo on Saturdays at a newly-formed Club at Stopham, in my constituency. We had a successful season, but a good many casualties, due, so our critics said, to our ignorance of the game. In the course of one of the matches which we played I was knocked over, got concussion, and was unconscious for an hour; however, after a few days in bed at the hospitable house of my friend, the late Sir Walter Barttelot (who owned Stopham), and a period of convalescence staying with my cousin, the present Duke of Abercorn, I fully recovered. I was due, by the law of averages, for a smash, since earlier in the year I had, without injury to myself, driven my Daimler car, in my own park at Shillinglee, into a tree, breaking the front axle, and damaging the radiator.

The Session of 1908 was an anti-cyclonic period before the great Parliamentary and political storms which were to break in 1909 with the Budget, to rage in 1910 and 1911 with the Parliament Bill, and finish with the Irish tornado in 1914. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's resignation was announced on April 6; three weeks later he was dead. The irony of political fate was sharply manifested in his case. In Opposition



he had been a despised and unpopular leader; many people, including some of his own followers, doubted if he would survive for more than a few weeks as Prime Minister. But from the first days of his Premiership he progressively improved his own prestige, and displayed powers of character, tact and resource which had been latent in him; in a few months he was a very popular Leader of the House. Then he suffered a heavy blow in the death of his wife; later his own health began to fail. He was Prime Minister for too short a time to make a name to be remembered. Yet had his great chance come earlier in life, before the inevitable misfortunes of old age overtook him, he might have altered the course of political history; he might, indeed, have preserved the Liberal Party as a vital entity for another generation. He had consolidated that Party once, and was by nature a peacemaker. He might have crushed the first sprouts of new disharmony which began to appear soon after his death.

His successor, Mr. Asquith, was, at the outset, faced by an electoral unpleasantness. The rule (since abrogated) that a Junior Minister, in certain offices, not held to be "offices of prize and profit under the Crown," had to be re-elected if appointed a Cabinet Minister, applied to Mr. Churchill's promotion to the Cabinet. He was promptly defeated in Manchester, and had to seek another seat in Dundee, where he was elected after a strenuous contest. I took part in the bye-election, and had my first experience of Scottish hecklers at outdoor meetings. But my participation in the election did not prevent Winston from asking me to tea with him. I found him at an hotel surrounded by a small and efficient staff, which, inevitably, included Mr. Edward

Marsh. I remember how grateful I felt to him for giving up half an hour of his much-occupied time to talk brilliantly, if discursively, to an unimportant opponent like myself. Much of his charm lies in his affectionate regard for his friends, at all times and in all seasons.

I saw a great deal of Winston that year, and recorded in my diary what an immense loss to our Party had been his defection from it. That was certainly the view of many of the younger Tories; nor did we hold "A. J. B." blameless in this matter.

The principal measure of the Session was the Licensing Bill. We had a long and sustained fight over it. F. E. Smith further increased his reputation in opposing it, and Mr. Samuel<sup>1</sup> made his in support of it. Mr. Horatio Bottomley first came into prominence in the debates on this Bill; despite the prejudice which, for various and obvious reasons, even in those days existed against him, he soon established himself in, or near, the front rank of Parliamentary speakers. Lord Birkenhead is credited with a remark to the effect that had Mr. Bottomley conducted his life otherwise, and had he been a barrister, he would indubitably have become Lord Chancellor. I also believe that he might have been Prime Minister had he entered Parliament as a younger man and in different circumstances.

The Bill, after its rejection had been moved by the late Mr. Salter and seconded by me, passed its Third Reading amid angry shouts from the Opposition of "Robbery, robbery" to which the supporters of the Government somewhat irrelevantly replied with "Snobbery, snobbery!" The Lords, at a later stage, took our view, and the Bill was rejected.

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Sir Herbert Samuel, G.C.B., G.B.E., M.P.

The other principal measure of the Session was the Old Age Pensions Bill. Mr. Harold Cox, who in many ways was an embarrassment to the Government which he was returned to support, made a very fine speech in moving its rejection. I have known Mr. Cox for many years. Alike on public occasions, when speaking or writing, and in private conversation, he is the only really consistent and persistent Free Trader whom I have ever met. Always a brilliant and lucid exponent of any case, one of his themes on this occasion, in effect, was the complete incompatibility of a union between Free Trade and State Socialism. His courage in saying what he did was as great as was the general truth of his thesis. Yet, brave as he was and is, I doubt if he could have spoken as he did in any post-war House of Commons, so changed is the attitude of Parliament towards what is loosely called "Social Reform." Again and again he stressed the value of individual self-reliance and responsibility in a way that is never asserted nowadays in the House of Commons.

The Tariff Reformers raised the issue of Protection and Preference whenever it was possible to do so. We had a debate of this nature in March. In the course of it I mentioned that while on a visit to France I had noticed that bread was actually cheaper there than in England. In dealing with the matter, by a slip of the tongue I spoke of the price of bread "per kilometre" instead of "per kilogram." Naturally, this met with a shout of laughter. When, however, I said that it was a *lapsus lingue*, and that I was not so ignorant as to be unaware of the difference between the two standards, the laughter generally subsided, and Mr. Lloyd George, ever friendly and kind-hearted towards young Members, nodded his

head and called out "Hear, hear," in acceptance of my explanation. But one prominent Member, of pronounced Jewish appearance, continued to guffaw, so I turned to him and said, "I must tell the Honourable Member that I am speaking of the price of bread in Biarritz and not in Jericho."

The sequel is of some interest. Then, as now (though the tendency was less pronounced), some of the popular newspapers were inclined to report merely a single phrase in a speech; and then only if it produced a "scene." So it happened in this case; in consequence, I received a number of letters from unknown or anonymous correspondents, some commendatory, and some condemnatory. The former category predominated, and for weeks afterwards at dinner-parties people whom I had met for the first time used to say, "I was *so* delighted that you said what you did to old ——" In fact, my remark was not particularly funny, and was certainly offensive, justifiable only as a retort to a bad-mannered attitude. Whereas the rest of my speech, which was not reported, or scarcely reported, was, I think, a creditable performance for an M.P. twenty-five years of age.

Home Rule, as an issue, showed signs of again coming to the fore in this Session. Mr. John Redmond moved a resolution in favour of Irish self-government. The debate was noteworthy for two speeches, both, from different angles and for different reasons, attacking the Redmondites. One was by Lord Percy, of whose brilliant services the Conservative Party was soon to be deprived by his premature death. The other came from Mr. Timothy Healy. With devastating and vitriolic gifts of satire and invective, an absolute command of language, and a delicious lightness of touch, when occasion de-

manded it, he was easily the greatest orator among the Irishmen; in some respects I consider him to have been the best speaker of all the Members of the House during the twenty-seven years that I have been there. In later years I got to know him well, and found him to be a charming and sympathetic friend, and the best of company.

Two further matters are worth recording in connection with this Session of 1908. In June, King Edward, accompanied by Sir Charles Hardinge,<sup>1</sup> Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, went by yacht through the Kiel Canal to Reval to meet the Emperor of Russia. Shortly afterwards a resolution was moved in the House of Commons which in effect (though the rules of the House prevented the charge from being stated in a direct form) was a vote of censure on His Majesty for making the visit; many attacks on Tzardom were made by Liberal and Labour Members in the course of the debate. The resolution was, of course, easily defeated after an admirable speech by Sir Edward Grey. But the fact that there was even a partial resurrection of the long-buried practice of attacking the Crown for an alleged act of direct policy was disturbing; it recalled memories of days, three or four generations earlier, when fierce political controversy surged round the Throne. No sensible person regarded the visit as other than a perfectly reasonable and proper one; it is probable that the debate would never have arisen but for the injudicious attribution to the King by the Press of an influence in foreign affairs which constitutionally he might possess, but of which in actual practice he did not, and could not, without grave risk, make use.

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Lord Hardinge of Penshurst, K.G., P.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.C.V.O., I.S.O.

The other matter relates to the suffragettes. Their first big raid on the House occurred in October. So serious a view did the authorities take of the situation that after it the streets and squares within a quarter of a mile of the House were cleared of both vehicles and foot-passengers, and a continuous cordon of police formed. Even Members going to the House had to pass through what, in military parlance, is called an examining post. Only when they had satisfied the Inspector in charge that they were M.P.'s were they allowed to go on their way.

No good is done at this time of day by discussing the rights and wrongs of this matter. Not even in the War did I see many scenes more repellent than these raids. It was unpleasant to see the patient, friendly, good-humoured London police being attacked and assaulted, often in a most vicious way, by women; in no other country would the police have made so little attempt at retaliation. They were constantly subjected to treatment which, had their opponents been men, would have been met with a baton charge. The suffragettes were only arrested when it was inevitable. There was something both sad and nauseating in the appearance and behaviour of the women themselves. They screamed and shouted, and were dishevelled and dirty from their exertions; they had wild eyes, and an expression of uncontrollable strain and excitement. Indeed, many looked as if they were drunk or drugged, but I believe that this impression was caused solely by hysterical enthusiasm and fanatical determination.

At the opposite end of the pole from these manifestations of the growing restlessness and recklessness of the age was the stately pageant of the London season. Though Edwardianism had relaxed the ritual of Victorian-

ism, the vast assemblages at the great houses still flourished. I remember one, in this summer of 1908, given by the Duke and Duchess of Wellington at Apsley House. Seventy of us sat down to dinner; the men were in knee-breeches, for the King was there as well as the Queen. All the Ambassadors, most of the Cabinet and many of the Opposition Front Bench were present at the ball which followed. I also remember a similar one earlier in the year at Dudley House. Dozens of high born and very pretty débutantes were there; dancing went on with a vigour which caused some of the dowagers to bewail the greater formality and courtesy of the Victorian age. "*Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.*" They were only saying what their grandmothers had said when the valse was introduced, or what their daughters are saying to-day to their grand-daughters.

Still, there was a difference between these pre-war functions and those which resemble them, in some respects, to-day. To be comparable, the latter would have to include round the preliminary dinner-table all the leading members of the Royal Family, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, Lord Snowden, Mr. Baldwin, Sir Herbert Samuel, Mr. George Lansbury, Mr. A. V. Alexander, the Ministers of Ruritania and Tuscania (for obvious reasons I give imaginary names) with their wives, as well as the clever young men and smart young titled damsels about whom "Dragoman" delights to write in the *Daily Express*. I do not think that such a gathering would be a wholly harmonious one. The men might be "matey"; I am certain that the women would not be.

Certain dinners in that summer stick in my memory. One was given by Mr. Gervase Beckett,<sup>1</sup> the then owner

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) The Honble. Sir Gervase Beckett, Bart.

of the *Saturday Review*, to contributors to that paper; there was some very erudite, charming and amusing talk, in which the incomparable Max Beerbohm was a principal participant. At another I sat between the late Lord Northcliffe and the late Sir Ernest Cassel. I listened respectfully to the conversation of two of the most powerful men in England.

A third, held in connection with an International Maritime Conference, was memorable to me because of one of the neatest retorts which I have ever heard. A most worthy, but prolix, Peer, now dead, made a speech of great length. But this hardly justified the rather boisterous cheers which greeted his remark, towards the end, that he thought he had said enough. He paused, and added, "Well, I will soon finish, to make way for my friend, Lord Desart; looking round, I feel that many of you must have got to know him in recent years, not personally, but in his capacity of Public Prosecutor." He finished his speech in respectful silence.



## CHAPTER VII

“Wanderlust”—Visit to Denmark and Sweden—Farming conditions in the former—Kiel and a trip round the German fleet—Hamburg and Amsterdam—An amusing train journey—Visit to Canada—The glories of the St. Lawrence—Quebec—Ottawa—Earl Grey—Winnipeg and the West—Montreal and the Mount Royal Club—Sir Edward Clouston—A summer camp in New Brunswick—Massachusetts—The fall in Canada.

IN 1908 I had a bad attack of “wanderlust,” and between June and the end of the year I went to Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Holland, Canada, the United States, Egypt and the Soudan. I visited the four European countries during the Whitsuntide recess in the company of my friend, Mr. T. W. Comyn-Platt.<sup>1</sup>

We crossed the North Sea in a small Danish steamer; as we had omitted to order cabins, I had to share an incredibly tiny one with two Danes, of whose language I could not speak one word. Tommy Platt dosed down in the small saloon. In the morning after leaving Harwich we ran into a great storm. In a considerable experience of the sea I can never remember seeing it more angry; indeed, the Captain said that, in thirty years, he did not remember a worse crossing. We were battened down, the heat and smell were very unpleasant, and the ship bucked and jumped like a mustang. I was horribly sea-sick for hours; at last Tommy Platt became alarmed at my condition, and prevailed on the kind-hearted Captain to allow me to lie in his cabin on the

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Sir Thomas Comyn-Platt.

bridge, where at least there was some fresh air. We reached Esbjerg at 11 p.m.—many hours late—and I got straight into what seemed (after the ship) the unbelievable luxury of a *wagon-lit*, and had some soup and biscuits, my first meal for over twenty-four hours.

Copenhagen is a very pleasant town in which to stay in summer, and I often wonder why more British tourists do not go there. Many of the buildings are ugly and modern, but near the quays there were, at least in those days, some glorious old, half-timbered houses with tiled roofs, steeply pitched in the Hansa style. The town is spotlessly clean, and there was very fair hotel accommodation. If the standard of cooking is not high, judged by that of the large towns of other small countries, such as Amsterdam and Brussels, it is passable, and (as in all northern countries) the *bors d'œuvres* are delicious. The Danes, as a race, are good to look upon, and very amiable to foreign visitors. The womenfolk, in particular, are not only graceful, but have beautiful colouring and complexions.

The wonderful collection of sculpture in the Glyptothek alone makes a visit to Copenhagen worth while, but what charmed me most was the Rosenberg Palace, built by Christian IX as a summer residence. Externally it is a pleasant-looking seventeenth-century house, set in the midst of an old-fashioned garden which, in those days, was dotted about with soldiers on guard; internally, it is one of the most charming and attractive houses in which I have ever been. There are about twenty rooms which are furnished exactly as they were in King Christian's day. These rooms contain examples of almost every epoch of European art from 1550 onwards: there is some very fine Gobelins tapestry, magnificent

Sèvres china, very valuable armour and lace, a unique collection of old Viking drinking-bowls, metal-work of Hanseatic craftsmanship of every age, and a good collection of pictures.

The Rosenberg Palace worthily commemorates its builder, who was a most remarkable man, for in his reign of forty years he managed to include such different activities as fighting at the head of his troops, painting pictures, navigating a ship, making various inventions, and hunting a pack of hounds.

During our visit to Denmark we took a trip into one of the best-known farming districts in order to see something of Danish agriculture; at the time, British farmers were constantly being urged to adopt the methods of their Danish colleagues. There is a difference in the conditions of supply and demand in the two countries which makes a comparison very difficult, but I have not the space to go into an intricate and controversial question.

It is, however, worth calling attention to one fact: Mr. Lloyd George and other critics of the British farmer, and admirers of the Danish farmer, always suggest in their speeches that the climate and land of Great Britain are superior to those of Denmark. I believe this to be a very disputable statement. The district which we visited was near Roskilde, where is the celebrated cathedral in which the Kings and Queens of Denmark are buried. This particular countryside may not be typical of all Denmark, though from personal observation I should say it was representative of a large portion of the country. The soil was one of the richest which I have seen anywhere in the world, comparable only, so far as this country is concerned, to the black

soil of Lincolnshire. The farms varied in size from about fifteen to eighty acres, all linked together by a co-operative system. In Denmark, in such a district as that which I visited, small-holdings and agricultural co-operation have not one-tenth of the natural physical difficulties to overcome which they have in England.

Where you have a combination of rich soil, a climate admirably suited to stock, a production of only two or three commodities, and an overseas market canalised, so to speak, in one direction, things are easy enough.

Though we could not speak a word of Danish, we managed, by signs, to convey to one or two farmers whose holdings we passed that we wished to inspect their land and buildings, and they were only too delighted to let us do so. By one farmer we were given a large glass of milk and a cigar on leaving.

We made a day's excursion to Sweden, going by boat from Copenhagen to Malmö; it was a Sunday, and, to judge from appearances, the inhabitants of Southern Sweden are more strict Sabbatarians than the people of Northern Scotland, which is saying a good deal.

We left Denmark for Germany with most pleasant recollections of the country and its people; such knowledge as we were able to gain in a short time, we owed largely to the guidance of Mr. Vaughan,<sup>1</sup> who was at the time the British Chargé d'Affaires at Copenhagen.

We left Copenhagen one evening, and woke up in our sleeping-berths at seven o'clock the next morning in Kiel. The fact that one was in the stronghold of German Naval Power, with the harbour full of the German Navy, gave one a vague, indistinct feeling of the necessity of being on one's guard; this feeling was

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Sir John Vaughan.

enhanced by the fact that our arrival coincided with King Edward's visit to Reval to which I have referred in a previous chapter. To judge from the local German Press, there was evidence of both restlessness and resentment about the visit.

After an excellent breakfast at the Hansa Hotel, we took a stroll along the quays, and discovered a small steamer about to start for a trip round the harbour and the Fleet. On board was a party which had been organised by the German Navy League; it consisted of a number of Germans and their wives, who were obviously country folk who had never been to Kiel before; the steamer had been chartered by the Navy League, but anyone could go on board who took the necessary tickets. Tommy Platt, who speaks German very well, inquired if we, as foreigners, should be allowed on board; there was a hurried colloquy between the officials who were shepherding the Navy Leaguers; apparently there was nothing in the regulations which prohibited anyone, whatever his or her nationality, from taking tickets; so, since Germans in those days were entirely bound by rules, we were somewhat reluctantly allowed on board.

Immediately the steamer left the quay a military-looking gentleman came forward and, through a megaphone, commenced to address the party on the subject of the harbour and the Fleet; probably because of our presence, he conveyed no information that was of the slightest value or interest, but his flow of oratory was unceasing.

When we reached the head of the Kiel Canal, just opposite the colossal statue of the Kaiser, the guide informed us that there would be an interval for rest

and refreshment; the ship drew alongside a quay, and the Navy Leaguers, who appeared to be both bored and exhausted by the dissertation to which they had been listening, hurried off to a neighbouring beer-garden.

When we resumed our voyage we passed close to two British destroyers which had formed part of the escort to the British Royal Yacht, and were awaiting its return. The guide remarked that we would notice that they were considerably smaller than most of the German ships. This was too much for Tommy Platt's patriotism; he held up his hand like a schoolboy, and inquired whether he might ask a question. The guide said, "Certainly, Sir." Whereupon Tommy inquired if he was aware that these two ships were merely two destroyers, and that there were many British ships not only equal, but even larger in size than those which we could see in the harbour? The audience, for the first time, appeared to be interested, and some hundred pairs of stolid German eyes were fixed on Tommy. The guide replied that that was so, and from then onwards appeared to be a little less self-assured and assertive.

Shortly afterwards we reached the side of the battleship *Yorck*; there was a whispered conversation, evidently concerned with our presence aboard, between the guide and an officer on the ship. Though Tommy strained his ears to hear what was said, all he could distinguish was a remark by the officer to the effect that it would be all right. As soon as we reached the quarter-deck, the officer came forward, bowed, shook hands with us, and said that the Captain and officers would be very pleased if we would come to the ward-room. Here we were treated in a most hospitable and friendly manner, and were given some excellent beer

and cigars. We had been there nearly half an hour, when the Captain said it would now be time for us to go. We returned to the deck to find that the German trippers had finished their tour of the ship! Nothing could have been more delightful than the Captain's treatment of us, but I suspect that it was due less to our pleasing personalities, or even to his sense of hospitality, than to a precaution against the possibility that we might be spies; in all the circumstances he could hardly be blamed.

We went on from Kiel to Hamburg, and on a lovely summer day enjoyed to the full a trip on the river, and dinner out of doors in one of the many pleasant restaurants in that town.

We next went to Amsterdam, and there stayed at the celebrated Amstel Hotel. Amsterdam is a charming place in summer, where one could spend weeks of sight-seeing. Being young and greedy at the time, I confess that I enjoyed as much as anything the dinner which I had at the Café Riche, which was, and is I believe still, one of the best restaurants in Europe.

When we were in Denmark we had met a British naval officer who commanded a fishery protection cruiser. This ship was at the time at IJmuiden; the Captain invited us to return to England on board of her. He and Tommy and I left Amsterdam one evening, and found on the platform three or four more of the cruiser's officers. We had a cheerful journey to the coast, in which the party engaged in a certain amount of ragging. We were disappointed to find that the Dutch did not appear to know the various choruses of *Miss Hook of Holland*, which was the leading musical comedy in England at the time. At one station we sang *Come*

*with me to the Zuider Zee* and invited people on the platform to join in the chorus, but they merely looked at us in a stolid, rather disapproving fashion.

At the last station before we reached IJmuiden, one of the officers, as the train slowly steamed out of the station, snatched off the cap of the station-master, a most resplendent individual, and afterwards, just as the train had reached the end of the platform, threw it back to him, shouting "Catchee capee." The station-master, who seemed to be a humourless Dutchman, was very annoyed. When we reached IJmuiden we were disturbed, but not altogether surprised, to see a posse of police drawn up on the platform. As we left our carriages we noticed that they were in earnest conversation with the guard, who appeared to be pointing us out to them. Fortunately, at that moment some blue-jackets appeared on the platform to collect our luggage; the salutes which they gave our party seemed so to impress the police that they took no further action, evidently being anxious not to provoke an international dispute.

Next morning we were taken round the harbour by the Mayor of IJmuiden, who received the Captain officially, and was dressed in his best clothes, with a top hat and frock-coat. He was a delightful man, with a great sense of humour, who spoke English beautifully. He began by saying, "I hope that you had a pleasant and happy journey from Amsterdam last night." At the same time he gave a slight, almost imperceptible, wink.

But it is not because of amusing and trivial incidents like these that I remember vividly, even to-day, this journey of Whitsuntide 1908; rather do I recall the grim efficiency of Kiel harbour, and the great Fleet riding at anchor, waiting for something.



I returned to a House of Commons dominated by sentimental Radicalism, where any reference to the growing menace of a vast upheaval in Europe was met by jeers from the Government back benches. "You'll never get the workers to fight, except against the bosses, so don't worry," was, I remember, the remark of a well-known Labour M.P., made about this time; it was an interjection in the course of a serious attempt by a Conservative to point out the dangers of the existing situation. It delighted the Liberal and Labour Parties, composed, as they were for the most part, of men abysmally ignorant of European affairs. Should any of my colleagues in the present House of Commons chance to read this, I wonder if it will recall to them the kind of speech that is to-day made in every debate on armaments. The point of view of the professional pacifist is fixed and constant: "There never will be another war; but, anyway, if there is, there is no need for us to be armed; armaments don't stop wars." They don't, but sometimes they help to win them.

In August, during the Recess, I sailed for Canada, in company with a friend and neighbour of mine, George Johnstone; he was the son of my predecessor in the representation of the Horsham Division—Mr. Heywood Johnstone. We had a smooth and pleasant passage. Provided that the weather is reasonably good, I think that a sea trip to Montreal in summer is a delightful experience. You see the aurora borealis, and sometimes icebergs with the rays of the setting sun on them, and there are few things which give you an impression of such absolute purity as these. You see the St. Lawrence—slow-moving, clear and majestic. You see the green and smiling farms of Quebec, with the wooded hills

in the background, and later the lovely Laurentian Mountains. You see the delicate outline of ancient and incongruous Quebec; and finally, you reach powerful and friendly Montreal—so much less frightening and foreign to a European than New York. On board your ship you breathe the best and freshest air of sea and land, and meet scores of eager and hospitable Canadians. I have made this voyage twice, and hope to make it again before I die.

The late Earl Grey was Governor-General of Canada at this time, and we stayed with him at Rideau Hall, the Government House of Quebec. He was an intensely enthusiastic Imperialist, who had travelled and worked in many parts of the Empire. Eager, impulsive, with a boyish zest for everything which he took up, accessible and charming to everyone with whom he came in contact, it is no wonder that he was one of the most popular Governors Canada has ever had. Indeed, in his qualities and his limitations he was much more like a man born and bred in one of the Dominions than the average Briton from home. He had the optimism which you find in new countries, and that cheerful disregard of practical obstacles which is often as great a bar as an aid to rapid achievement. He was also, like most men in the Dominions, completely devoid of any pomposity, and overflowing with kindness and hospitality. He drove me round Quebec in a phaeton, unattended by escort, servant or detective. I remember shortly afterwards mentioning this to a friend of mine in the United States. Having lived in Washington, and knowing the elaborate arrangements invariably made for the safety of the President of the United States when he travels abroad, my friend would hardly believe me. He was at first

angry, and then laughed when I said, "But, then, you see, Canada is a democratic country"!

During our drive, Lord Grey talked much of Canada and her destiny; he was burning with enthusiasm for, and love of the country. Often, when a man raised his hat to him as we passed, Lord Grey would stop and talk. In this way there were many friendly little conversations. Just as the sun was setting we drove up to the terrace of the House of Commons. It was a still evening, the noises of the city were scarcely audible, and there was a glorious purple on the distant hills. The view from that terrace is always fine—at sunset, or sunrise, it is magnificent. Lord Grey stopped the phaeton, and was silent for a moment. Then he said, "It should be almost impossible to be parochial from such a platform. Alas! sometimes they are. Sometimes they are!" I enjoyed that drive as much as any experience that I had in Canada.

From Quebec we went to Winnipeg. The West was then in the full flush of the prosperity and progress which the early days of this century brought after the disappointments which followed the first boom of the eighteen eighties. Land was rushing upward in price, though the full height was not reached until a couple of years or so later; when it was, lots were sold in the centre of Winnipeg for a price approximating to that which lots of similar size were fetching at the time in Piccadilly. Yet there were people alive (an uncle of mine among them) who could remember when the price of land within a stone's throw of old Fort Garry (around which Winnipeg was built) was sixpence an acre.

By means of letters of introduction, and through the kindness of friends, George Johnstone and I, within twenty-four hours of our arrival at the "Royal Alec"

(Royal Alexander Hotel), had met scores of Winnipeg people. Being young ourselves, we naturally gravitated towards the youthful set in the town. It was composed of a most delightful lot of young men and women. Many of the former already occupied positions of responsibility in the town or province. All were desperately keen, alike in work and play, full of the most boundless vitality and optimism, and permeated with sentimental regard for Canada and the Empire. To me, alike as a convinced Imperialist and as a young and energetic man, it was all thrilling; so much so that but for the fact that I had a widowed and invalid mother at home, I think I should have thrown over English politics and settled in Canada.

We played polo at the St. Charles Country Club, and push-ball with the Canadian Mounted Rifles; we lunched and dined at the Manitoba Club; we went to many parties, and made many excursions in the neighbourhood. One day we took a two-hours' rail journey to a prairie town; there we hired a hack, and had a five-hour drive across the wheat farms. The land was absolutely flat, and in every direction you saw a vast golden sea of wheat. We stopped and talked to many farmers, every one of whom was as friendly and hospitable as he could be.

From Winnipeg we returned east to Montreal, and for the first time I entered the portals of the famous Mount Royal Club. There was nothing in the world at that time which quite resembled the Mount Royal Club. On its list of members were the names of all the men, by then most of them old, rich, and in some cases retired from business, who had made modern Canada in an economic sense. Lord Strathcona and Lord Mount Stephen both belonged to it. In the Club you would be

liable to find any day at lunch-time various members of the Drummond family, and of other families whose names were familiar throughout the Dominion for leadership in finance and commerce, such as Sir Thomas Shaughnessy<sup>1</sup> (President of the C.P.R.), Mr. R. B. Angus and Mr. Edward Clouston<sup>2</sup> (of the Bank of Montreal). I lunched with these three one day. The food was excellent and the surroundings luxurious, but in the coffee-room everyone ate and drank sparingly; there was a spirit of comradeship, and a good deal of intercommunication, some of it of a chaffing character, between the tables; but there was also an atmosphere of dignity, responsibility and cautiousness. I did not, at the time, unfavourably contrast Winnipeg and the West which I had just left with Montreal, but it seemed to me as if a space of fifty years or more, in thought and outlook, separated the two communities, despite their interdependence. I did think, however, how far more impressive was the unobtrusive attitude of the leaders of Canadian business in Montreal than the noisy assertiveness of some of the ten-million-dollar millionaires whom I had met in the United States.

We stayed for a couple of days with Mr. and Mrs. Clouston at their charming house on the Island of Montreal, near Ste. Anne-de-Beaupré, a French-Canadian village, which looked as though it had come straight from Normandy.

From Ste. Anne-de-Beaupré we went east to New Brunswick, there to join Vernon Willey at a summer camp. This camp had been hospitably put at our disposal by some Americans. It was known as Gutta-

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Lord Shaughnessy.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards Sir Edward Clouston.

moose Camp, and was on Upper Lake Magaguadavic, some miles from Vanceboro', and from the United States frontier. The camp was in lovely surroundings at the foot of gently sloping hills, densely covered with birch, poplar, hemlock, spruce and beech. There were several wooden huts, staffed by a steward, who was also the engineer of the launch, a cook called "Bert," and two guides who were lumbermen in winter. They were good fellows, and we made great friends with them. When on the trail in search of exercise, fish or game, we shared and shared alike in every way with them. We helped them to carry the shelter tents, sleeping-bags, cooking utensils and food; together we portaged the canoes at rapids; we ate with them, and sat round the camp-fire after supper talking with them. I think that the two guides, Tom and "Woodie" Maclean, were typical of the lumbermen of this district. Like most of the people in this part of New Brunswick, they were descended from Scotch settlers in Ulster, who had migrated to New Brunswick in the thirties and forties of the nineteenth century. They were intensely Orange in their politics, fiercely Canadian and Imperialist in their sympathies, and mistrustful and disdainful of the "—— Yanks, south of the border."

One Sunday when we went to church at the tiny settlement of Magaguadavic we met several other local people, mostly farmers, whose holdings were clearings in the forest, scattered about over a wide area. The farms were mixed farms, and well stocked and cultivated.

I was impressed by the moral and physical qualities of the owners. They were hard-working, honest, religious, and by no means unintelligent. Both men

and women had, in general, good looks and an appearance of fine health and physical strength. I found that they disliked both the United States and what they knew, or had heard, of their own West. They were, in fact, a stable, homogeneous, contented community, which it is always refreshing to find in any part of the restless, ambitious, racially mixed North American Continent.

The impression of restfulness and dislike of modernity which seemed to prevail in this part of the Province of New Brunswick was increased in my mind by a visit one day to Fredericton to see a dentist.

It was very warm, and the old and picturesque town, mostly built of wood, seemed to be asleep as I drove drowsily along its tree-shaded streets in the neat buggy I had hired.

The driver, a venerable gentleman, and, like all the people whom I met in the place, most friendly and polite, said the town had never been the same since the English soldiers had left it. "But that must be nearly thirty years ago," said I, recollecting that British troops were withdrawn from Canada in the late 'seventies or early 'eighties. "Yes, I suppose it is," said the old man sadly. "There was a Captain Tabor with them. I worked for him for eight years. He was a gentleman, if ever there was one." Thenceforth, for the rest of the drive, I could not escape reminiscences about Captain Tabor. We discussed politics, Great Britain, the United States, Mr. Asquith and Sir Wilfrid Laurier, but always my driver returned to Captain Tabor and his virtues. It rather spoilt my drive, but I couldn't help feeling touched at the delight of the old man in finding, in the shape of a visitor from the "old country" (a rarity in

Fredericton), a link with his beloved Captain Tabor and the vanished English troops.

We had a wonderful month at Guttamoose. We would take long walks, one day through thick bush, clambering over the fallen trunks of great trees and big boulders; on others, we would go bathing and canoeing; on others, again, we went fishing or shooting. Provided you had a licence, you could fish and shoot anywhere. We caught fish in the lake with a bait, and trout on a fly in the various streams which abounded. We shot many partridges and ruffed grouse, some deer and duck, and a few porcupines and musk rats.

The woods and lakes were full of animals and birds. On one of our trips we saw (I give the local name) a bull moose, several deer, a bear, hundreds of tree and ground squirrels, racoons, musk rats, a weasel, a mink, porcupines, duck of various kinds, including black-back, red-bill and little brown, loons, cranes, crows, fish-hawks, owls, whip-poor-wills and Canadian robins.

There were also in this district, though we did not happen to see any, a few Canadian sables and babcoots, some hares, and martens in fairly large numbers. Beavers, like Indians, had long vanished from this part of New Brunswick; wolves, too, had become extinct, and there were few, if any, caribou.

The joint destruction of Indians and beavers by the advance of civilisation moved the normally unsentimental "Woodie" to recite to me, when we were on the trail, a lengthy and sententious poem by a local rhymester.

The season for moose shooting only started about a week before we left the camp. Accompanied by one of the guides, I spent five or six days of unavailing effort



looking for a bull moose. The guide attempted to attract one by the well-known but, to my mind, rather unsporting method of calling; that is to say, through a roughly-fashioned horn of birch bark, he imitated the calling of the female moose. But nothing came, though we saw several cow-moose, at which, of course, I could not shoot. It was tantalising to have seen several bulls before the season opened. I remember one day when we were going in a canoe up a river we suddenly came on one standing motionless in a clearing fifty yards from us; he looked rather like a Heath Robinson torpedo.

I have seldom spent a harder time than during those days looking for moose. Once the two of us went in a canoe, paddling in turn, for miles all day. About every quarter of a mile we had to portage the canoe, which was big and heavy, at rapids, and return for our food, gear, rifles and ammunition. On another occasion the canoe was upset, and, though we rescued our rifles and ammunition in time, our food and bedding were soaked, so we spent an uncomfortable night.

Once we went on foot, carrying a shelter tent, two rifles, a lot of ammunition, blankets and a huge sack with food and cooking utensils. As we were sometimes on a rough trail, but more often going through primeval forests knee-deep in bush, without a trace of a path, it was hard work. At night, as the guide and I were going off to sleep, something came pattering about, just beyond the circle of light thrown by the dying fire. The guide—superstitious, like most woodsmen—whispered that a man had been accidentally shot near by a few years ago, and his ghost was said to haunt this particular camp. I was, however, too tired to worry about ghosts, and dropped off to sleep before he finished

his tale. Once, when we were benighted, we slept without overcoats or blankets on a big rock in the centre of a stream. There was a slight frost, too. Sometimes it rained, but not for long, and when it cleared up we stripped and dried our clothes by the heat of a wood fire. The mosquitoes and gnats were often bad by day, and the sun very hot.

But it was a great life for a man of twenty-six, and I have never felt better. In later years, during the War—in Gallipoli, Palestine and Arabia—I felt grateful for this early taste of hardship. Alternations of heat and cold, hunger, thirst and fatigue never harm a healthy young man, unless he has too much of them. No one who was not utterly insensitive to the charms of scenery and colour could fail to be delighted at the beauty of the things we saw, however much one was roughing it.

I remember one morning in particular. There had been a sharp night frost; the sun rose, in a halo of salmon pink, slowly dissolving the mist, and causing the most wonderful lights and shades on the glistening grass and rocks. The maples and birches were just putting on their fall dress, and were a glorious reddish-brown colour. There was a smell of balsam and pine, and the hawks were on the wing, poised against the blue sky, beginning their morning hunt. The fish rose in the river, and the small birds began to call to each other. I was torn between a desire to sit motionless, observing it all, and an equally strong desire to hustle around and help "Woodie" with the breakfast which my inside so needed. After a few moments of silent contemplation, breakfast won!

From Guttamoose I went to Boston to join Vernon Willey, who had left the camp some days earlier. In

Massachusetts I met a number of delightful and hospitable New Englanders. One day I motored to the north shore, saw the charming old towns of Gloucester and Salem, whose names are so closely intertwined with the history of the United States, and dined with an American on his yacht. On another, I had a fifty-mile drive with Vernon through Worcester to a place called South Barre, where the late Lord Barnby had bought a property for the purpose of setting up a branch of his great Bradford woollen industry in America. There was a large new mill, a model village or township for the workmen, a church, school, and a large dwelling-house with a small farm for the manager, all built by him. I stayed there a few days, living with Vernon at the manager's house. Vernon had some polo ponies there, on which we rode about the beautiful country in the neighbourhood. Our appearance out riding created some curiosity, since, even in those days, "horseback riding," as Americans call it, had been abandoned in that State for the bicycle and autocar. One old "hay-seed" said to us, "You'se folk is the first I've seen horseback riding in twenty years."

The country round Barre is charming, and reminded me so greatly of old England that I became homesick for Sussex. The night frosts had begun; the season of the fall had come. Beautiful as are autumn tints at home, they give but a faint impression of the glorious hues of the trees in Western Canada, or the United States at the same season. In Massachusetts they are, perhaps, best of all. The reasons for the deeper colouring of the leaves in the northerly portion of the North American continent, compared with those in Great Britain, are the sharper frosts by night and stronger sun by day. When you

add to these colourings of the earth glorious blue sky and bright sun, together with crisp, champagne-like air, you get a zest from life which compensates for much of the terrible heat, as well as the plague of dust and flies which so often mars the North American summer.

## CHAPTER VIII

New York again—Heat-waves and skyscrapers—Coon bands—  
A visit to the Bowery—Tammany Hall—England—Hatfield—  
The P. & O.—Egypt—Khartoum—The White Nile—  
Colonel Buxton—A Christmas trek—Buffaloes at Gebel  
Achmed Agha—Kodok—Major Matthews—Taufikia—  
Colonel Joyce—The Sobat—Abyssinia—My Lord the  
Elephant—Tonga Island—Elephants again—A shipwreck—  
Sir Reginald Wingate.

FROM Massachusetts I went to New York, and stayed at the old Holland House Hotel, long since vanished from the Fifth Avenue scene; this is regrettable, as nowhere in the United States could you get better service, and nowhere did an Englishman feel more at home. I stayed in New York for some time, and was warmly greeted by many old friends. I also made some new ones. Once again I experienced to the full the sparkle and "snap" of life in New York, if one had some money and plenty of friends. We lunched and dined and supped at Sherry's and Delmonico's, Martin's and Rector's, and at other places now, alas! no more than a memory. Once, with a number of friends of both sexes, I motored to a place some sixteen miles out of the city, where we dined at a somewhat raffish inn. There, for the first time in my life, I heard a coon band playing ragtime. Though New Yorkers of to-day will scarcely credit the fact, there was not, I believe, when I first visited New York, a single negro orchestra in it.

On one afternoon—when a deep blue sky and a

mellow September sun reconciled one to the ugliest skyscraper, and made some of the more modern ones beautiful—I had a delightful trip in a Harbour Commissioners' launch, lent me through the kindness of a friend, and I then realised to the full the might and majesty of the city and of its river and sea traffic.

I was in New York in late September, and my visit coincided with an unprecedented heat wave. The roof-gardens had been closed for the season, and I must say that once or twice I found the temperature of restaurants and theatres, especially when wearing a "boiled" shirt and dress clothes, almost unbearable. Having so recently been living rough in the open air, the sweltering and crowded streets were both repugnant and alarming to me. An American friend used to preface his introduction of me by saying, "He belongs to the wide-open spaces; he's been eating porcupines among the Canucks, and doesn't like our little burg when it's warm."

During this visit to New York I had an experience which I shall never forget. An American friend of mine, who has since become a prominent broker, was, in those days, an official of the New York Municipality. Of good family, and having had the advantage of being educated at an old and famous American University, he took the unusual course (for one of his position) of plunging into the turgid waters of New York politics, and was a member of the Tammany organisation.

In 1908, at the age of twenty-five or twenty-six, he occupied a position of responsibility in the municipal life of the city. He asked me if I would like to meet some of the men who ran the machine, and with them make a tour of the Bowery. I said that I would.

We went to dine at a down-town restaurant. Here we met two of our guides. One was a notorious lesser "boss" in Tammany; he belonged to one of the best-known Irish political families, most of whose members had been involved in a "graft" scandal a few years previously; he was a member of the Clan-Na-Gael, an Irish Revolutionary Society busily engaged in fomenting trouble between the United States and Great Britain. The other, also an Irishman, was the political agent of a certain newspaper proprietor. He afterwards occupied a very high position in the New York Municipality. While in office he had the misfortune (for it was before the days when gangsters enjoyed practical immunity from the law) to be shot in the back by a political rival; he was dangerously wounded, but recovered.

Both men were smartly dressed, well set up, clean and good-looking; they had charming manners, and were very friendly and polite to me. From their appearance and behaviour I gathered that here were not men who would waste the "boodle" obtained from fishing in the muddy waters of New York politics on either women or drink. On the contrary, asceticism was favoured by them as helping them to reach the eventual goal of the Lord Mayor's Parlour in New York or the House of Representatives in Washington.

At dinner we agreed that, if our tour became known, a minor Press stunt might be made of the fact that a Tory M.P. had been seen in the company of two notorious enemies of the British Empire; we further agreed that, as neither their constituents nor mine would much relish such information, I had better be known by a pseudonym. So I was "Tom Jones" for the rest of the evening.

After dinner we were joined by a professional thief,

much like my dinner companions in appearance and manners.

The portion of the Bowery which we visited was a worse slum than anything I had seen in Paris or London. Tall, dilapidated houses, which had not had a coat of paint for years, almost met across the narrow streets. There were filth and garbage of all kinds everywhere, and the roadway and sidewalk were in a state of disrepair that no East End borough in London would permit. People of all ages and nationalities swarmed on the stairs of the houses—in the gutters—in the roadway. We arrived about 10.30 p.m., and from then until 1 a.m., when we left, there were as many people about, and as much noise and movement, as in Piccadilly at midday. Enormous, truculent and rather evil-looking policemen, swinging their truncheons, were to be seen at intervals in threes or couples—never alone. Invariably they recognised my companions, and made a gesture of salute, saying, "Howdy, Mr. —," to the boss and the agent, and "Howdy, Jack," to the professional crook.

We went into some opium dens, and saw both Americans and Chinese smoking. In them were some of the most frightful human wrecks I have ever seen. We went to a Chinese restaurant, also to a joss-house and a theatre. At the latter we went behind the scenes. It smelt like a rabbit-hutch which had not been cleaned for a year. There was an indescribable medley of actors and actresses, boys and girls, babies in arms, scenery and costumes, in a place about twenty feet square. We went into a number of underground dives, some of them exclusively for Chinese, some for Americans. In practically all of them I followed my companions' example



of only drinking water. The reason for this was obvious in the third or fourth drinking-den which we entered. "See all them dopey fellows," said one of my companions; "the hooch here 'ull put a feller out in five minutes. Then the gurls get their pickin's." It was indeed a scene Hogarthian in its luridness. A number of men, several of them United States sailors, were sprawling on a dirty red-plush sofa, which extended the length of the room; half-finished drinks were on little tables in front of them; a number of women of the town, of almost incredibly degenerate and repulsive appearance, were calmly and methodically helping themselves to anything they could get out of the men.

Wherever we went, whether we met honest poverty, legitimate business, flaunting vice, abject misery or prosperous poisoning, my companions were recognised and greeted—sometimes effusively, sometimes suspiciously or resentfully, but always with a measure of respect.

In that district, and in many others in New York, honest and dishonest, reputable and disreputable, native-born and immigrants alike contributed to Tammany. The essence of the system was that Tammany Hall looked after its own. Started as a benevolent society, it grew until a point was reached where the decent citizen not only knew that if he joined Tammany he would receive a limited protection, but also that if he held aloof he would be constantly interfered with when going about on his lawful occasions. A crook, male or female, knew that under the ægis of Tammany partial immunity from the operation of the law could be looked for. Thus, in effect, organised vice enjoyed as much freedom from interference as any lawful business. The only

condition imposed on all was to vote as the bosses directed.

Though the blackguardism for which Tammany was responsible was milder than that of the gangsters and racketeers of our day, these could not have flourished in New York had not the soil been prepared for them by the action of Tammany Hall. Though I knew it not at the time, I was witnessing the beginning of a growth which will surely destroy the civilisation of the whole United States, unless her citizens show far more moral and physical courage in grappling with it than they have done hitherto. It was but a few steps from what I saw in that sultry night in the Bowery, nearly a generation ago, to the abduction and murder of the Lindbergh baby.

For days I was haunted by the memory of the sordidness of these scenes, and by a realisation of the amazing interplay of politics and vice in the Republic. These things seemed so remote from the cheerful, confident, smiling, efficient, hospitable America which I had known hitherto. Nor could I regard as adequate the comments which I got from my friends in the latter when I discussed the question.

"Ah, well, you see, this is a young country; you had a peep behind the curtain. We know things are rotten bad there, but some day we're going to clean them up. Give us time."

Still, there is truth in the contention. Half the difficulties which arise in the relations between Great Britain and the United States come from the illusion of a common standard in the two countries. Every decent American who spends any time in England, or any decent Englishman who spends any time in America

will, unless he be a hopeless fool, meet scores of men and women whom he will like, whose views on things generally are his, and with many of whom he will form firm and lasting friendships.

From this, most people conclude that there is a resemblance in the institutions and points of view of the two countries, which, in fact, does not exist to anything like the extent supposed. The same language is spoken in both lands, and each nation still contains a large proportion of people whose ancestors lived in the same little islands; but none of this affects the point that the American outlook and standpoint in politics, the judicature, finance, the police, and, perhaps most important of all, humour, are fundamentally different from ours.

“Ah! but,” some priggish person will say, “we have a common moral standard.” It may be so, but it is common only between those of Anglo-Scottish race in this country and those of the same race and descent in the United States—whose numerical proportion in the whole population constantly decreases. The moral standards of the English and Scotch on the one hand, and the Irish on the other, are in complete antithesis. The latter may be the best, but they are not the same. If one falls back on the statement that at least the United States and Great Britain derive much of supreme importance in their respective national life from a common origin, the answer is that that is true. To-day, however, this common origin may be compared to that of all Western civilisation which owes its birth to Greece and to Rome, and shares, theoretically at least, a common respect for Christianity and its Founder. An American who reads these lines may say, “What about our com-

mon heritage of and share in Shakespeare and Milton ? ” I would reply, “ What about our common share in and admiration of Dante and Goethe ? ”

It would, to my mind, help good relationship between the two countries if, at Anglo-American gatherings, instead of the usual banalities and half-truths, some one would put the matter in true perspective by saying, “ The United States and the British Empire are the most powerful units in the world to-day. Their opportunities for good or evil are unbounded. Their domestic difficulties are very great. Neither can focus its strength as it should because of the diversity of its racial composition. Each is trying desperately to attain a common conception of citizenship among its *mélange* of races. The United States is striving to weld representatives of every race into a homogeneous whole, while the British Empire is striving to find a common ideal and aim for Englishmen, Scotchmen and Irishmen in the British Isles and overseas, as well as for those natives of Africa and Asia who owe allegiance to the British Crown. To talk of Anglo-Saxon unity is to make these efforts difficult by infuriating all the non-Anglo-Saxon races in both Empires, and outside of them. It is of the highest importance for the whole world that we should strive to work together for the benefit of humanity. But we should do so, not because of largely artificial and imaginary resemblances between us, but because we have such immense opportunities of doing good if we work together, and of harm if we work separately.”

I crossed the Atlantic for home early in October, having a pleasant and peaceful voyage on the old *Campania*. Almost immediately after my arrival, I went

to spend a week-end at Hatfield with Lord and Lady Salisbury. It was fine October weather, admirably suited to interpret the spirit and story of the great Tudor building; there were Royal personages, statesmen and politicians in the party. It was the complete antithesis of the Bowery—here were colour, peace, tradition, mellowness, and the appearance of stability.

In November, a great friend of mine—Christopher Tower, who was killed in the War—and I started for a shooting trip on the White Nile. We had a very rough and unpleasant passage across the Mediterranean in a P. & O. ship. That was before the days when my friend, the late Lord Inchcape, had effected a peaceful and beneficent revolution in the Line. In those days, the P. & O. fully justified the criticisms directed against it by Mr. Kipling. There were some interesting people on board ship, including Mr. Gokhale, the Indian leader.

We spent a few days in Cairo, where I renewed my acquaintance with a town in which I had spent several months as a child. Little did I realise that some years later it was to be my leave-town from the deserts of Sinai and Arabia, and in which, burnt black by the sun, I was to taste for a while the advantages of civilisation after months of desert warfare.

From Cairo we went, by the comfortable Nile steamers and railways, to Khartoum, where we stayed at the Club. Helped by the kindness and advice of the Sirdar, Sir Reginald Wingate (whom I had known when I was a child), and other friends, we soon had our little expedition fitted out, and departed by Nile steamer for Renk. Two prominent Egyptologists—Professor Sayce, and an Egyptian Pasha—were on board. I did not

enjoy the first day's trip very much, as I had a bad attack of what is vulgarly known as "Egyptian tummy." I felt very ill, lying in a small and very hot cabin (it was round about 90° in the shade at the time), and there was no milk on board, except sweetened tinned milk. However, one of my native servants discovered a milch goat on a float, which was being towed alongside to convey Soudanese and their live-stock. Without, I think, the owner's permission, he milked it for my benefit! This, and some excellent '47 Cognac, given me by the Pasha, revived me. What, however, really cured me, was an incident at El Dueim. Here a great friend of mine, who was at Eton and Oxford with me, and was afterwards to be my Colonel in the War—Mr. Robin Buxton—was stationed as an Inspector of the Soudan Civil Service. With characteristic energy he had organised a polo club, consisting of himself and four or five Egyptian or Soudanese subordinates of his stationed there. They played three-a-side in the sand, on ponies purchased in the neighbourhood.

Robin and the whole outfit of players and ponies appeared on the bank to welcome Kit Tower and me, and to suggest a short game of polo. As, however, the boat only stopped twenty minutes, there was no time, so, instead, we had a wild gallop across the desert. I started thinking I should die at any moment, and I returned a fit man.

At Renk we boarded the boat which was to be our home for two months, save for short intervals of two or three days when we were able to hire or borrow transport. It was, to give it its local name, what is known as a *nuggar*. A *nuggar* is a flat-bottomed boat with a round bow and stern, with an internal measurement

of about sixty by twenty feet. On our *nuggar* a deck had been formed by railing some rough planks horizontally with the gunwale. A small shelter, or cabin, made of native matting, had been erected for us on the deck, and in addition there were a cook's galley and a latrine. These shelters were, of course, not rain-proof, but that did not matter, for it was the dry season; nor were they sun-proof, in so far as the sun's rays coming through them could give one sunstroke, if one was without a helmet; but our cabin did afford us shade by day and protection from the heavy dew at night.

We were a large company for so small a boat; there were Kit and I, and my English valet, an ex-cavalryman named King, who was useful in all sorts of ways. Then there was Hakim, who was our skinner, and took general charge of the other natives, except the crew. He was a fine-looking man (of mixed blood, with Arab predominating), and a most reliable and respectable servant. There was Hassan, the cook—a Berberine; he was very dirty in appearance, but an excellent cook; he was both the wit and butt of the party; his only serious lapse was to get drunk once, I think it was at Taufikia. Our table-boy was one Taiib, a very good-looking Omdurmani, about fifteen or sixteen years of age; he was a good servant; his fault was that he was inclined to "carry on" with stray young ladies whom he saw in various villages which we passed. More than once, fathers or brothers of the girls in question came and protested; once a European host of ours chased him with a hunting-crop round the compound of the house in which we were staying. I heard afterwards that our host had particular reasons for objecting to Taiib's attentions to the female members of his household.

We had two trackers, or shikaris. One, Safi Mohammed, was a grave and silent Arab; he was a pious Moslem; he did his work excellently, but was very hot-tempered; once, when I reproved him, he nearly drew his knife on me. The other, a Dinka (one of the negro tribes of the White Nile), was also good at his job.

Then we had a *Rais*, and a crew of seven—all Dongolawis.

Considering that Kit and I were both young and inexperienced, and could speak very little Arabic; considering, too, that some of our native personnel had never before been into the wilds, and that we were more than once, amid unhealthy and unfamiliar surroundings, in some danger from tribesmen, animals and sickness, the whole lot behaved very well. In fact, they were a cheerful, loyal and united little body.

All big-game shooting is dependent upon transport, since the larger and shyer type of animal is found only at some distance from human habitation.

Before the days of the general use of motor-cars, there were three main methods of transport in Africa. One of them was to employ human carriers; another involved buying or hiring ox-wagons, mules or donkeys; but oxen and mules, like horses, are subject to attack by the tsetse-fly, though donkeys are immune; consequently, only the latter can be used in a "fly" country. The third method, feasible only where it is intended to shoot in the neighbourhood of a navigable lake or river, was the use of a boat. This practice, which still prevails on the Nile, enjoys advantages over all the other means of getting about, since it does not involve packing and unpacking one's household goods every day. In normal conditions, the pursuit of big game in Africa



involves much harder work than it does in India, where it is frequently driven to the rifles. In Africa you often have to walk for miles before you sight your quarry, and then stalk it by crouching and crawling, for two hundred yards or more, over dusty ground, black with burnt grass.<sup>1</sup> These conditions, added to a blazing sun, produce the most wonderful thirst which I have ever experienced, and an almost unbelievable amount of perspiration. It is delightful to be able to deal with both by going straight home to a bath and tea, or a long drink which you are certain to find in your floating abode; on the other hand, on trek you may have to wait hours for the arrival of your transport, if things go wrong.

Even then, with the best of native servants, the production of a hot bath, tea or dinner takes some time. It is bad for the temper, and detracts greatly from the fun of the day's sport to have to wait, thirsty, dirty, hungry and, as twilight comes, chilly, in some desolate spot for the appearance of the convoy.

As against this, living on a boat always means mosquitoes, and usually heavy dews at night. I have been on a big-game expedition more than once in Northern Rhodesia; save near a water-hole there were no mosquitoes, and one slept in the open without a net. On the Nile, not only did we have to sleep under a mosquito net, but, after dark, to sit under one as well, in addition to wearing special protective boots.

<sup>1</sup> The natives burn the grass in the dry season in most parts of Africa. The burning is succeeded by a growth of green shoots, however lacking in moisture the soil may be; this practice, which has something to commend it from the pastoral point of view, and is mentioned by Herodotus as existing in his time, is to-day forbidden in areas of European settlement, owing to possible damage to trees and crops.

But life on the river was glorious by day, when we were sailing. In winter the wind is always from the north, so we used to sail upstream with the wind. Sometimes it happened that there was no shooting, and the whole day was spent in moving from one area to another. The sun would always be hot enough to let us sit on deck with nothing on but thin pyjamas, a sun-helmet, and a spine-pad; but the breeze, usually steady and never excessive, prevented the heat from being unpleasant. Overhead the sky was a cloudless blue, of a deepness and richness which made even the sky of Canada in the fall pale by comparison; the river was a paler blue; the great belts of rushes and water plants were a staring, vivid green; beyond, again, was the pleasant khaki colour of the bush; as the *nuggar* gurgled along drowsily, the crew would chant their age-old songs, and all seemed peaceful. But there was lurking everywhere the menace that is the very heart of Africa. On almost every sand-bank you could see a green log, that was a crocodile; from time to time the snout of a hippopotamus would appear above the water, ready to overturn any boat smaller than ours. Overhead, vultures and kites soared; on land, wild beasts lurked in the bush; and you would see great, naked savages, swaggering along with seven-foot spears in their hands. It was hard to know which to admire most—the men, with their thin flanks, great broad shoulders and big chests, or the girls and young women, also naked, save for a strip of leopard skin round their middles, with their fine busts, straight backs and magnificent carriage.

I have not the space to give more than a short account of the two months' trip. After leaving Renk, we went to El Wat, from thence we "trekked" on donkeys to a

place called Khor (*i.e.* stream or *wadi*) Rao. The Nile was very high that year, and, consequently, the game was some distance from the river, and not, as is the case usually in the dry season, near in order to get water. We were away six days in all, and got three buffalo at Jebel Ahmed Agha; this was the only place in this area of the White Nile Province in which one was certain to find buffalo. Local cynics said that every member of the herd bore the bullet marks of globe-trotters or British subalterns.

We had some amusing experiences on this trek. When we started, one donkey, with all the pots, pans and eggs for the journey, ran away. The eggs were broken, but the cooking utensils survived, after a severe denting. Kit's donkey fell down with him twice in the first mile, and a native child, encountered en route, had hysterics at the unusual and terrifying apparition which we presented to him. On Christmas Day, it was so hot that one could hardly bear to touch the metal of one's rifle; I heard afterwards, at a Mission Station not far away, that their thermometer registered 104° Fahrenheit in the shade. In the course of the day we had to be carried by Dinkas across a Khor, which was full of water. The passage of the donkeys and their loads took a long time, during which I carried on, by means of an interpreter, an interminable conversation with the headman of the village and his six or seven wrinkled and toothless companions. I offered them tobacco from my pouch, and one accepted it; the others waited to see the effect on him of smoking it. When they had done so, they wisely refrained from following his example.

After rejoining the boat, we proceeded, by easy stages, shooting as we went, to Kodok. Kodok was formerly

known as Fashoda,<sup>1</sup> but the name had been changed in deference to France, and in the interests of the Entente.

Fashoda was the headquarters (and for aught I know still is) of the White Nile Province, and the *Mudir* (Governor) had his residence there. The holder of the office in those days was Major Matthews, an officer of the Marines, who was killed in Gallipoli. He was a fine administrator, and might have come from the pages of Kipling. A rigid disciplinarian (the Soudan in those days was virtually under martial law, but of a benevolent kind), stern, but just, and with a great sense of humour—he was both worshipped and feared by his subjects. He was as swift and thorough in his punishment of evil-doers as he was friendly and helpful to all in trouble and distress. Natives came from far and wide to consult him about erring wives or husbands, as the case might be. Mothers came to ask him to prescribe for their babies. Fathers sought his advice as to how to deal with recalcitrant daughters. One such, in my presence, said that his three comely daughters each refused to marry any of the eligible youths in the neighbourhood. He wanted Matthews to imprison them. The latter replied that apparently he had an arm, and should use it!

The tribes within his administration were Dinkas (on the right bank of the Nile), Shilluks (on the left bank),

<sup>1</sup> At Fashoda in 1898 occurred the incident which nearly caused war between France and England. When, after the defeat of the Khalifa at Omdurman, the Anglo-Egyptian forces went south, they found a Frenchman—Major Marchand (afterwards General)—at Fashoda, who had hoisted the tricolour, and proclaimed the place as French. Marchand had come through from French West Africa. The British Government insisted on his withdrawal, and eventually the French Government agreed to this course. There was a furious interchange of bellicose threats by the Press of both countries. *Punch* published a cartoon very offensive to the French.

Nuers and Anuaks—in the neighbourhood of the Sobat, Baro and Pibor rivers—and some Arabs in isolated groups in the Shilluk country. Justice was administered by the Sheiks of each tribe according to each tribal law. The *Hakuma* (Government) only interfered when a manifest instance of injustice was brought to its notice, or when a murder, or a serious crime, was committed by one tribe upon another. Even so, the Governor often waived his right to interfere if the matter could be settled satisfactorily between the tribes.

I saw Matthews, one day on the Sobat river, leave his steamer, and, with two policemen, go to an Anuak village and seize a cow stolen from a Nuer by the inhabitants, who were hostile. Some of the young men jumped about, brandishing their spears; Matthews took not the slightest notice, and eventually the cow, which was as unfriendly as the Anuaks, was hoisted on board the float, alongside the steamer. All the while a small gun (a five pounder, I think) was trained on the village, with the gun crew, consisting of three Egyptian soldiers, standing by.

Matthews was the kindest of hosts to us. We stayed with him at Kodok. He towed our *nuggar* up the Sobat, and we stayed with him again later at Kodok. Our first visit coincided with the feast of Bairam. We saw a ceremonial parade of the Soudanese battalion, and no troops in the world look smarter or drill better on such occasions. We were present at a reception of the notables of the neighbourhood, and also saw some sports, and a distribution by Matthews of cakes and sweets to the women and children of the village.

From Kodok we went to Taufikia, where I met Joyce,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Lieut.-Colonel Joyce, C.B.E., D.S.O.

who was stationed there with a Soudanese battalion. Ten years later I was serving under him and Lawrence in Arabia.

From Taufikia we went up the Sobat via Nassar to the mouth of the Pibor river, being towed by the *Mudir's* steamer; thence we went by ourselves up the Baro river.

The Baro rises in Abyssinia, but for about fifty miles before its junction with the Sobat its right bank is in Soudanese and its left in Abyssinian territory. The country in this district is as wild and desolate as any which I have ever seen. It is absolutely flat, and nearly all marshy, even in the dry season. There are certain game-tracks threading the marsh, which have a tunnel-like appearance from the height of the elephant grass and reeds on either side. The more common species of big game, such as water-buck, were as tame as those in a zoo, owing to the rarity of both shooting-parties and natives. Never have I seen so many insects. Mosquitoes, contrary to our previous experience, appeared by day as well as by night. After dark, clouds of nocturnal insects, of all shapes and sizes, besieged our *shamadans*,<sup>1</sup> and in the morning the deck was black with their corpses. Everything seemed steeped in a miasma, and reeked of dank and rotting vegetation. To make matters worse, Kit fell ill with violent diarrhoea and a high temperature, so we decided to return to the Nile and a healthy climate. It took us some days to do this, as the wind was now against us and we could only drift with the stream when there was none of it. Sometimes, when the bank allowed of it, we were towed by the crew. Once we got some local natives to help;

<sup>1</sup> Candle-lamps with glass shades.

however, after pulling the rope for ten yards or so, they demanded payment in advance. On my refusal to give them either beads or cloth until they had earned them (there was no currency in use in this happy neighbourhood, and it was untroubled by the gold standard), they tried to rush the boat—swimming to it with their spears held out of the water in their right hands. I thought we were in for a shooting fight, and had swift visions of future questions in the House about my killing of Anuaks. But the *Rais* saved the situation by giving the leading warrior a pretty stiff clip on the jaw with the butt end of an oar; the rest then returned to the shore, and left us in peace. Since these days there has been more than one murder of Englishmen in this district, and I believe a punitive expedition. On the whole we were lucky to have escaped serious trouble.

During this part of our trip we each got a water-buck, white-eared cob and other buck. With royal game, owing to Kit's illness, we were unlucky. I am a very bad shot, and had the humiliation and mortification of missing a giraffe and an elephant on two consecutive days. Failure to shoot the giraffe I minded least, as there is no satisfaction in killing so beautiful and harmless an animal; moreover, I could only get one difficult shot at nearly three hundred yards. But the elephant was a different matter. He had magnificent tusks, and the sale of them would have paid for the whole of my expenses on the trip. Owing to the high grass, it was hard to stalk him, but at last I had a good view at what should have been an easy range. I tried the "ear shot" (only certain parts of an elephant's hide are pervious to bullets), and succeeded, I believe, merely in grazing his shoulder. I was shooting with an old

paradox rifle, and the concussion of it nearly stunned me. Before I could get a second shot he was gone "into the blue."

We had many minor adventures on the Sobat. One of the crew had a gathering in his hand, which had swollen to twice its natural size. I lanced it with a Gillette razor-blade, and then dressed it with permanganate of potash. In a few days the hand was quite healed. I was very proud of my surgical skill. On another occasion I shot a teal from the *nuggar's* deck. Our milch goat (purchased from a British R.E. corporal at Taufikia), much frightened at the report of the gun, jumped off the deck into the small hold, on top of the wife of a local guide, who was cooking her lord and master's supper. She was so upset, both literally and figuratively, that her husband had to go to bed supperless.

After our return to the White Nile we went upstream to Tonga Island to try to get a Mrs. Grey antelope. This rare animal, called after the wife of its discoverer, is found only in one district in all Africa, about a hundred square miles in area. It haunts swamps, and is difficult to locate even in the dry season, when the grass is burnt, as it squats like a partridge. On this occasion, with the grass as it was unburnt, it was almost hopeless to expect to get a shot. We did, in fact, see one buck, but he jumped up well out of range, and was lost to sight in the high grass in an instant.

Returning to Kodok, we went on trek after elephant, and Kit got one. Save when first I went into action, during the War, I have never been more despicably frightened than I was on the occasion of our encounter with this herd of elephants. As in war, it frequently happens that one comes into action against elephants,



when one is desperately tired, cold and hungry. We rode on mules for the best part of two days; on the third day we started on foot at 2 a.m., and though we found a place where the ground was covered with elephant dung and the trees defoliated and saplings broken by a herd, we did not come on it; we got to camp at four-thirty in the afternoon. Next morning, after a few hours' restless sleep due to cold and overstrain, we again left at 2 a.m. for the same ground, and just as it was getting light walked right into a stationary herd of cow elephants and calves. Fortunately they were up-wind of us, and, as an elephant has very short sight, they did not spot us. For nearly half an hour we lay motionless with elephants in a semi-circle in front of us—some barely fifty yards away. Had the wind suddenly changed, we should have "been for it." We did not dare move, in case they saw us. At last they moved away from us, and Kit was able to stalk and kill a small bull who was in the rear of the females. Fatigue, alternations of heat and cold, and (I fear I must add) terror, brought on an attack of my former internal troubles, and for two days I lay in misery in my camp-bed in the open, unable to eat anything but a little arrowroot. During the day my bed had to be moved at intervals to catch the shade of the only tree in the camp, and, to make matters worse, two great vultures persisted in sitting expectantly on the tree. Towards the end of the second day I got a little light-headed, and started firing with my revolver at these birds of ill omen. Matthews had sent a native police *shawish* (sergeant) and two policemen as escort for us. The former, a most capable and charming native, was alarmed at my action. I think he believed I had gone mad, and henceforth never left my bedside,

having previously instructed his men to scare away the birds, and also the numerous stray natives who kept coming to stare at me.

On the third day Kit returned from collecting his ivory, and we went back to Kodok, with me sitting, more dead than alive, on my mule, supported on each side by a Soudanese policeman. After a few days in bed at Matthews' house I recovered. From Kodok we were towed back to Khartoum by the mail steamer. Our trip had been, on the whole, very successful, our bag including an elephant, a giraffe, three buffalo, roan, hartebeest, water-buck, reed-buck, white-eared cob and several kinds of gazelle, as well as small game.

On the way back we had one more adventure. We were having dinner one night in the curious meat-safe-like contrivance intended to keep out mosquitoes, on the steamer's deck, when there was a bump which threw us from our chairs. We ran below to find out what had happened, and discovered we were aground; the lower deck was practically awash, and the hold and the trough by the fires full of water. As usual, there was a float alongside, full of native passengers, livestock and merchandise. The natives started a terrific hulla-baloo, jumping about, and nearly causing the barge to capsize. I found a native policeman on the steamer, who was travelling on leave, and told him to go and quiet them. When I came on him, he had just woken up; as it was hot he had been sleeping quite-naked except for a bandolier and a blanket cast loosely over him. He sprang to attention when I spoke to him, and, still wearing the bandolier, but nothing else, dashed to the barge and, with the aid of a thick stick, restored order. The float was then cast adrift, as was our *nuggar*; next, we

started to shift the cargo on the steamer to lighten her. After two hours of hustle, dripping with sweat and bitten all over by mosquitoes, we had the satisfaction of getting the steamer afloat again.

Next day we reached Khartoum, where we spent two delightful days staying at General Gordon's old palace, with my friend, Sir Reginald Wingate.

Sir Reginald has an unique record, for he is the only man living who has governed a great province of the Empire for eighteen years; most Governor-Generals and Governors have a term of office of five years, and very occasionally it is extended for another five. Sir Reginald was a most popular and successful Governor and Sirdar of the Soudan from 1898 to 1916. Affectionately known to his subordinates as "Master," he was the model of what a public servant and administrator should be.

The night that Kit and I left Khartoum for England there was a lump in our throats when, on the platform of the railway station, we bade farewell to our native servants, and realised that within a few hours we should leave the Soudan, probably for ever. Few normal Englishmen, when they are young, mind heat, dust, flies, thirst or fever; but if they have any good in them, they cherish, for the rest of their lives, the memory of good companionship in wild places, the thrill of pitting their cunning against wild animals, the joy of honest fatigue, the glory of a tropical dawn, and the infinite peace of a tropical night. The man who has known Africa or India in his youth, has memories to last him all his life.

## CHAPTER IX

Parliament again—Tariff Reformers and Mr. Balfour—Lord Roberts and the National Service League—The campaign for more Dreadnoughts, "We want eight, and we won't wait"—A modest "Back Bencher," Mr. Stanley Baldwin—The Lloyd George Budget—*The World* and Edmund Yates—I become Editor of *The World* at the age of twenty-seven—Lord Northcliffe—Mr. J. L. Garvin—"Spy" and "Sem"—The "Cocoa Press"—The Savoy Grill and its clientèle—Mr. George Grossmith—Mr. Arthur Bouchier and Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree—Tree as "Svengali"—A "First Night" supper-party at His Majesty's Theatre.

WHEN I returned to England in February, I found a further improvement in the relations between the Tariff Reform wing of the Unionist Party and Mr. Balfour. Early in March the Executive Committee of the Tariff Reform League entertained him to lunch. The occasion was intended to mark a final healing of the breach between the titular leader of the Party and us extremists. Mr. George Wyndham, Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Professor Hewins, Mr. Evelyn Cecil,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Leo Maxse, Mr. Goulding, Mr. James Craig<sup>2</sup> and Mr. Blumenfeld of the *Daily Express* were among the stalwarts present. Not all of them, unhappily, are alive to-day to see the successful issue of the lengthy battle for a protective system for Great Britain.

Looking back on those years, I can recall with satisfaction other causes which I championed whose truth

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Sir Evelyn Cecil, P.C., G.B.E.

<sup>2</sup> Now (1932) Viscount Craigavon, P.C.

was to be proved in later years, despite the jeers levelled at them in 1909 by the "intellectuals" of the Liberal-Labour majority.

There was the National Service League, founded by Lord Roberts. We advocated a very mild form of universal military training for Great Britain. We did so because we contended that the almost universal adoption of conscription on the Continent and the huge growth in the last decade of conscripted armies, especially those of Germany, Russia and France, had made our military position even weaker than it had been in the past. We pointed out that Great Britain's Imperial interests were more important than ever, and that in the event of war the whole of the Expeditionary Force, which Lord Haldane's genius was then preparing, might be required to reinforce our overseas garrisons. We emphasised the fact that, however potent the British Navy might be to prevent invasion, the Militia and the Territorials could not garrison the British Isles without expansion or assistance, even if both these forces would not be required to act as replenishments for the Expeditionary Force, as we thought that they would be. We said that such a form of training as we advocated could not be regarded by any Continental Power as a menace or challenge, and that the moral and physical effect of such training upon an over-industrialised population would be wholly beneficial. Readers can judge the extent to which events immediately after 1914 proved the validity of our arguments. Had our proposals been adopted, not merely the "first hundred thousand," but a second and third hundred thousand could have been sent to join the Regular Army in France long before Christmas of 1914; a few weeks' intensive training would

have fitted the National Service men to stand alongside even the incomparable "Old Contemptibles," and their arms, uniform and equipment would have been ready to hand.

The establishment of National Service in Great Britain would not have hastened the Great War; coupled with a declaration that in certain circumstances we should stand by France, it might have averted it. It would certainly have reduced its length.

Lord Roberts' campaign and our efforts in support of it met with the opposition of, and ridicule by, the Government, indifference by many leading Conservatives, and hostility from some serving soldiers. Of the latter, I am willing to admit that many felt honest doubts as to the wisdom and utility of the scheme; others, however, who were allowed an unconstitutional latitude in stating their views (since officers on the active list are not supposed to engage in public controversy), were, I am convinced, concerned with a desire to please their political chiefs. At least two of them owed a good deal to Lord Roberts in his service days.

No one deserved the hackneyed term of "*Grand Seigneur*" more than Lord Roberts. Neither his popularity, nor the many stories of him in India, South Africa and elsewhere, exaggerated the transcendent merits of a personality compounded of courage, candour, chivalry, modesty and grim determination, all in the highest degree. It was a privilege to work with and for him.

Another movement with which I was associated in the early part of 1909 was that for building more dreadnoughts. We were, at the time, deficient in this type of ship, which had been devised a few years earlier.

To a great extent they rendered obsolete the earlier types in the same class—"pre-dreadnoughts," as they were called. There was some dissatisfaction at what was regarded as the lack of warmth with which both the Navy League and some of the leading members of the Conservative Party advocated an increase in the building programme. This led eventually to the formation of a "Ginger" organisation, known as the Imperial Maritime League. F. E. Smith was our principal champion in the dreadnought campaign, and the slogan was used—"We want eight, and we won't wait." Eventually the building of an increased number of Dreadnoughts was accelerated.

In a Debate which took place in March 1909, a Labour Member said, "No one wants more dreadnoughts except the Noble Lord the Member for Horsham, and the *Daily Express*." Parliamentary humour is of a peculiar kind, and this satirical reference to a young and irresponsible Member and to a new and upstart journal was greeted with shouts of laughter.

However, in 1914 quite a lot of people wanted dreadnoughts, and in 1932 thousands more people read the *Daily Express* than ever read defunct Liberal newspapers which supported the anti-Navy policy of 1909.

Before I come to deal with the famous Lloyd George Budget I must mention one other incident which occurred early in the 1909 session. A new Member of the House (he had got in, I think, at a bye-election in the previous year) proposed a motion on the "export of capital." He made quite a good speech. His name was Stanley Baldwin. If someone, on that day, had told Mr. Churchill, or Mr. Runciman, or Sir Herbert Samuel, all Members of the Government as well known

then as they are to-day, that at some future date they would be serving under the modest and unobtrusive Back Bencher who had just spoken, they would have thought him certifiable as a lunatic. The elaborate and sustained irony of politics is that of life itself.

The famous Lloyd George Budget of 1909 was introduced on April 26th. There was a realised deficit of £714,000 and an anticipated deficit for 1909-1910, on the then existing basis of taxation, of £15,762,000—a large sum even for these days of frenzied finance, and formidable indeed before 1914.

Mr. Lloyd George stated that the increase in expenditure which produced these results was due mainly to two items alone—Old Age Pensions, and the increase in the Navy necessitated by the German building programme. He claimed, with reason, that both policies were supported by the majority of the House of Commons irrespective of Party. Had the matter rested there, it is probable that the great Budget fight, extending over the whole field of politics, and resulting eventually in the Parliament Act, would never have occurred. But, of course, Mr. Lloyd George went much further than merely meeting the immediate and indisputable financial needs of the time. In his Budget speech he outlined a whole scheme of social reform, such as sickness and unemployment insurance, together with State schemes for land development and afforestation. To produce the necessary money there were proposals to increase death duties, estate settlement duties, stamp duties, liquor licence duties, and those on motor cars and motor bicycles. In some of these cases the previous rate of duty had been a scarcely perceptible tax; from the 1909 Budget onwards it became a real imposition, increasing,



by reason of the War and its aftermath, to an intolerable burden. The Budget initiated the petrol tax, and the super-tax now known as the sur-tax. Further, it created what may generically be termed the land valuation tax, though, in fact, this was divided into three compartments, one on so-called unearned increment, one on undeveloped land not used to the best advantage, and one on the benefit accruing to a lessor from the determination of a lease.

Though the language of Mr. Lloyd George's Budget speech was mild and restrained—almost, in fact, in inverse ratio to his proposals—it soon became apparent that he aimed at the rehabilitation of society by the redistribution of wealth through taxation. His aims were, in fact, indistinguishable from those of the evolutionary Socialists of those days, or to-day, though his methods differed from them in degree.

During his platform campaign for the Budget before and during the first 1910 Election, he spoke about landlords and vested interests with a venom and ferocity which had not been displayed in Great Britain since the Reform Bill campaign of 1830-32.

F. E. Smith said of him at the time that he had presented to the electors "the naked issue of class hatred." That was quite true, and while his diatribes were mainly directed against one form of wealth, he set the fashion for attacking rich men because they are rich. He was, in fact, the father of class consciousness in this country. Not all his great services during the War can obliterate from his record mention of the disservice which he did in setting the fashion of using political platforms to encourage envy, hatred, and malice on the part of the many against the few. In those days

of his prime as a platform speaker, his stock of verbal vitriol and satire was unrivalled. No modern Socialist, not even the late A. J. Cook, has approached him in this regard. Some of his remarks were outrageous in their brutal humour and frankness, but they left their mark, and even his opponents could not help laughing at the discomfiture of their own friends. To-day he and Mr. Winston Churchill, and (occasionally, not always) Lord Snowden, are the only leading politicians left who can "hit to hurt." The others can only give a gentle push. It is the penalty they pay for being universally respected in the House of Commons or the House of Lords. Supporters of Mr. Lloyd George at the time who, openly or in private, disapproved of the tone of his speeches said that the excuse, if not the justification, for it was to be found in the ferocious and personal attacks which individual great landlords and peers made upon him, and in the exaggerated fears as to the effect of the Budget. Certainly he had vigorous opponents. Some, like the late Lord Willoughby de Broke, did excellent service in the anti-Budget campaign, and enhanced the prestige of their order. Others, like one or two Dukes, whose knowledge of Newmarket Heath, or of foxhunting, was as extensive as their experience of modern political conditions and popular audiences was small, merely made fools of themselves, and helped their arch-enemy "the little Welsh attorney." But did those of us who, in either House, fought the Budget, really exaggerate the effect of the Land Duties? It is true that the taxes were small in themselves, but they had engrained in them a vicious and inequitable principle; further, they were so unsuccessful that a little over a decade later they were removed with their author's

consent. The duties prevented, for a time, the building of small houses, and thus contributed to produce the housing shortage, aggravated by the War, from which we are still suffering.

Of course, the greatest and most debatable question of all in connection with the Lloyd George Budget was the great Social System—Old Age Pensions, Health Insurance, and partial (for the full system was not applied until much later) Unemployment Insurance—the money for which was to be provided over the next few years from the changes in the scope and nature of taxation.

Was the system justifiable in itself, and was it justified in the particular circumstances of the times? My answer is “Yes” to the first question. Though his methods for effecting this partial equalisation were wrong, Mr. Lloyd George did not meet with dissent from those of us who were the young and progressive Tories of the time, when he said that the poor and needy were entitled to a bigger share of the increased wealth of the nation, resulting from thirty or forty years of unparalleled industrial expansion, and indeed the necessity for providing wage-earners with some form of compensation for misfortune was recognised in the Workmen’s Compensation Bill, passed by a Conservative Government.

The results of the social reform policy, inaugurated from 1908 onwards, are really understood only by those who, like myself, knew a poor industrial area<sup>1</sup> before the inception of this policy.

The improvement of the inhabitants in physique and appearance has been remarkable, and, on the whole, there has been a great improvement in self-respect, offset by a lessening in self-reliance, and the acceptance of the

<sup>1</sup> In my case, Stepney.

State as a universal provider. Incidentally, this attitude has greatly reduced the hold and influence of the Churches in industrial districts. As a result, in Victorian times, of the re-awakening of religious fervour, especially in the Church of England, and the linking of the preaching of Christianity with social endeavour, the Churches in slum areas, by the beginning of the twentieth century, were performing the social functions of the pre-Reformation Church for the very poor. With the growth of State social services, a gradual decline in the Churches' activities in this respect took place; this decline was followed by a regrettable falling off in their membership. Speaking generally, however, the growth of State social services has not abated the immense voluntary charitable effort in the British Isles, and we still possess a proud pre-eminence among nations in this respect.

It is not so easy to answer the question as to whether the great extension of the social services was justified in the circumstances.

Great Britain was faced with the imminent necessity of adopting one of the greatest naval-building programmes in her history. The Government accepted this as axiomatic, even though it disputed, as excessive, the figures and views of the Conservative Opposition. Moreover, though the Agadir crisis was still two years off, smaller incidents of a nature calculated to disturb Anglo-German relations had occurred. There was a good deal of Press reference to the menace of the German Fleet expansion.

In the summer of 1909, Lord Rosebery, at the Imperial Press Conference banquet, openly spoke of this menace, in a notable and brilliant speech, to which I had the privilege of listening.

Even Lord Grey, the most pacific of Foreign Ministers, admitted the possibility of war with Germany, though he thought it was a remote one.

“Two things, in my opinion, two things, would produce conflict. One is an attempt by us to isolate Germany. . . . Another thing which would certainly produce a conflict would be the isolation of England, attempted by any great Continental Power, so as to dominate and dictate the policy of the Continent. That always has been so in history.”<sup>1</sup>

This is indisputable, and any statesman of vision could see that history was more likely to repeat itself in the near future than at any time since the French revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. It is arguable that war in 1914 ought to have been avoided, but it is undeniable that the risk of war existed in 1909 to a greater extent than for years, and seemed likely to remain with us.

In such circumstances, faced with an actual deficit, the most ordinary prudence dictated the conservation of resources; but Mr. Lloyd George made it clear that he was going to embark on great new schemes of expenditure involving vastly increased taxation over a series of years. He departed absolutely from the canons of all the great orthodox Chancellors—such as Mr. Gladstone and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach. His idea of the Treasury was not that of an instrument to husband the resources of the taxpayers, but that of a suction pipe to draw in money to feed voracious and expanding internal State services. It is no answer to this to say that, notwithstanding, we were able to raise, during the War and after it, vast sums of money, far in excess of anything dreamt of by Mr. Lloyd George in 1909. The Treasury has made, in the

<sup>1</sup> House of Commons Debates, 29th March, 1909.

last twenty-three years, such inroads on the individual capital and income of the people of these islands, in the form of death duties on the one hand, and income-tax and super-tax on the other, that admittedly we are near the bottom of the well. Perhaps, before these words are in print, we shall be faced with the necessity of curtailing the social services, and of still further increasing indirect taxation.

Mr. Lloyd George's 1909 Budget was the kind of Budget that is produced in war-time, but only part of its produce was used to prepare for war, or ward off war, according to which way you look at it.

In the Cabinet, at the time, were many wealthy landowners and men of affairs, who were also moderate Liberals in their political views. Yet they permitted every form of abuse and obloquy to be hurled at their class and the nature of their wealth, apparently without protest, certainly without resigning. They did nothing perceptible to correct, or to check, the fanatical enthusiasm of a man who, from his previous circumstances, was wholly inexperienced in the subjects which he handled and issues which he raised, as well as bitterly hostile, for personal reasons, to landowners. Some of these former Ministers of the Crown subsequently occupied posts of great importance in War and post-War Ministries; some are in office as I write. Their patriotism to-day is unimpeachable. But I, for one, can never wholly forgive them or trust them, because of the ignoble part which they played in 1909. They had knowledge, and Mr. Lloyd George had not; moreover, he has largely expiated his offence by his magnificent handling of affairs from 1916 to 1918.

All through the summer of 1909, until the beginning of

October, and then, after a brief Parliamentary adjournment, until the Bill went to the Lords in November, the great Budget battle raged.

It was one of the fiercest and most sustained of Parliamentary fights. Night after night we sat up until two, three or four in the morning. One or two Members on our side, notably the late Mr. Pretyman and the late Sir Laming Worthington-Evans, showed a complete and comprehensive grasp of the Finance Bill, and were a source of great strength to its opponents. But debating honours rested with the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. Lloyd George showed a resource, an imperturbability, a vitality and a sense of humour that the longest sittings could not exhaust.

In April 1909 I became Editor of *The World*, and thus attained one of three ambitions which I had formed in those days. These were—to sit on the Front Bench in the House of Commons, to be a Master of Foxhounds and to be editor of a newspaper.

*The World*, under the editorship of Edmund Yates, had enjoyed considerable influence and financial prosperity. Together with *Truth* and *Vanity Fair*, it constituted a group of journals which worked in a field of journalism at that time untilled by the Daily Press. They gave information about the inner circles of politics and society, and dealt in a frank, intimate, and sometimes impertinent manner, with the sayings and doings of prominent people who had what is now called a news value. In fact, they filled the place of the gossip columns in the popular Daily Press of to-day.

In pre-Victorian days newspapers such as *The Times* made comments of great frankness, and often of considerable brutality, on men and women well known in politics

and society. It is indeed amusing to contrast the dignified tone of *The Times* of to-day with some of the extracts from its columns of a hundred years ago. In the eighteenth century the *Tatler*, the *Spectator* and the *Guardian* differed little in their methods from *Truth*, *The World*, or *Vanity Fair* in the eighties of the last century, or from those of the gossip-writers of to-day.

The Daily Press in the mid- and late-Victorian era, almost without exception, discarded this type of journalism, in accordance with the attitude of dignity and reticence which the Victorian age assumed. Nevertheless, men like Edmund Yates in *The World* and Labouchere in *Truth* purveyed their goods to a public that was vain and snobbish, though quite respectable. It consisted of those who wanted to read about themselves, and those who wanted to know everything that there was to be known about members of the Royal Family and persons who had some distinction, as a result of birth, attainment or both. Interspersed with these personal paragraphs there were, in the case of all three of the journals which I have mentioned, shrewd comments on literary, artistic, political, financial and industrial matters. Labouchere was fearless in attacking scandals and impostors; both Yates and the Editor of *Vanity Fair* did not hesitate to take a bold and independent line on many varied subjects. I believe that the suggestions frequently made about Labouchere and, to a lesser degree, about Yates, that they conducted their respective papers on a system of organised blackmail, were untrue. I do not believe that they accepted bribes, in money or in any other form, in order to publish or to refrain from publishing information about any person or thing. I do not believe that for a consideration of any kind you could have



deflected either of them from a course upon which he was determined. Nor do I think that they took a stand only because it sustained or increased the circulation of their papers. They liked influence and independence, and power to help or hurt a person or a cause.

After Yates' death, *The World* came into Lord Northcliffe's possession, and as one of a large number of newspapers owned by a big combine it lost its individuality. Moreover, the place of this type of journal was being gradually taken by illustrated society weeklies. *The World*, in the days of Northcliffe's ownership, made some rather feeble efforts to arrest its falling circulation by imitating these papers to the extent of providing a few illustrations in each issue. The attempt was not a success, and in the spring of 1909, as the paper was losing money, Northcliffe was anxious to find a buyer for it.

Through a mutual friend, I was approached by a man just over thirty, who had risen from being office-boy in a newspaper office to a position in which he held the directorship of several papers, and the enjoyment of considerable wealth. He was a journalist of ability, and he suggested that we should each put up a sum of money to purchase *The World*, and that I should be the Editor. His view was that, while some of the social features in the paper should be abolished, the political, literary and financial sides should be developed. He thought that, aided by his knowledge of, and experience in, the technical side of the business, I should be able to assume the responsibility of the editorship, since for some years past I had written fairly regularly for the Press.

After discussion, lasting for some weeks, we came to an agreement by which he supplied the major, and I the minor, portion of the comparatively small sum of

money required to buy the paper. It was arranged that we should form a company with myself as Chairman, and that there should be, besides ourselves, two directors, each nominated by one of us. I asked F. E. Smith to become a director, and he consented.

Lord Northcliffe liked doing things in a magnificent way, and on the completion of the sale of the paper he asked me to come and see him. I went to his St. James' Place house, in which Rogers the banker-poet had once lived, and was ushered by servants and secretaries into a darkened room. Northcliffe was, I think, suffering from his eyes at the time. The great man was sitting under a bust of Napoleon, carrying on a telephonic conversation. He motioned me to a chair; I thought both the expression on his face and his general attitude were a little theatrical, but after all it has been the amiable weakness of at least three great men whom I have known to fancy themselves like Napoleon. When the conversation on the telephone, which seemed to me to be quite unimportant, was at last finished, Northcliffe extended to me a plump hand and an amiable smile, and began to talk. I found that he had asked me to come and see him in order that he might give me his blessing on our venture, and some useful and disinterested advice. He pointed out that, just as at twenty-one I had been the youngest Member of the House of Commons, so at twenty-seven I should be the youngest among London newspaper editors; he said that a distinction of this kind was an asset of which to make full use, and added that, while he did not suppose that I wished to leave politics for journalism, I should find knowledge gained in the latter profession of great use in the former. For nearly an hour he talked of *The World*, and what might and what should be done with it.

During my connection with *The World* its circulation and advertisement revenue increased by a considerable extent, and the deficit on its working decreased. My partner gave me useful help and advice, and I had the invaluable assistance, as manager and sub-editor, of Mr. Laker, who had been with *The World* in Yates' day, and of my friend, Mr. Ellis Robins,<sup>1</sup> as private secretary.

I was proud of the contributors to *The World* in my time. Mr. J. L. Garvin wrote several of the leaders on foreign affairs; Monsieur André Mévil (who was the "Pertinax" of those days in the *Echo de Paris*) contributed a weekly letter from Paris on politics and affairs. Among others who wrote regularly for us were Admiral Fremantle, Mr. Mostyn Piggott, and Miss Dorota Flatau—none of whom is alive to-day—as well as Mr. Sydney Brooks, Mr. Adrian Ross and Mr. P. G. Konody. "Spy,"<sup>2</sup> formerly of *Vanity Fair*, did some of our cartoons, and the redoubtable "Sem" others. We had valuable articles from distinguished foreigners in Vienna and elsewhere. In addition, *The World* included among its contributors several clever young men just down from the Universities.

It is no use being a journalist or a politician if you dislike conflict or controversy. I have never been averse from either, and I found full scope to indulge in both in those febrile years 1909 and 1910.

*The World*, under my editorship, took a prominent part, in conjunction with weightier contemporaries, in attacking the "Cocoa Press." At the time the *Daily News* and the *Star* were owned by members of the Cad-

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Lt.-Col. Robins, D.S.O., Resident Director in Southern Rhodesia of the British South Africa Company.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards Sir Leslie Ward.

bury family, the well-known chocolate and cocoa manufacturers. In accordance with the proprietors' views, the *Daily News*, at least editorially, took a line strongly Puritan, Nonconformist, Radical and anti-Imperial. It attacked indifferently the Church of England, landlords, the licensed trade, gambling, a big Navy policy and "Imperialism," which was constantly depicted as leading to the oppression and enslavement of native races. No newspaper of any importance to-day would dare to print the things about the Empire which were constantly appearing in the *Daily News* before the War.

Unfortunately, however, this newspaper had associated with it—in fact, though not in name, as its evening edition—the *Star*, which was celebrated throughout the land for the extensiveness and, one must say, accuracy of its racing news and prophecies. The racing correspondent of the *Star* wrote, and still writes, under the pseudonym "Captain Coe." We made great play with the alliteration: "The three C's—Cadbury, Coe and Cocoa."

Much of the cocoa imported into Great Britain was produced on the Portuguese Islands of São Thomé and Príncipe. Native African indentured labour was employed by the Portuguese owners. Unquestionably the labourers were often induced by Government officials to leave their homes on the mainland, and then forced to work in the plantations; the work itself was hard and badly paid, and the workers fared ill.

We nicknamed the *Daily News* and *Star* the "Cocoa Press." We asked why papers so solicitous for the welfare of native races, and so morally indignant about "Chinese slavery," were silent concerning the scandals of São Thomé and Príncipe. We said that the Liberal Press, like the Liberal Party, was an organised hypocrisy,

affecting sympathy with the poor and oppressed and to be the champion of every moral cause, but, in reality, obeying the orders of millionaires, whose political views were the reflection of their business interests. If you could get people to drink less alcoholic liquor, they would drink more cocoa. It was an admirable plan to sell your paper only to the "unco' guid" in the morning, and to have an afternoon edition for the great army of gamblers.

The attack of *The World* and its contemporaries was, in my judgment, amply justified, and had a distinct effect upon the electorate.

My *bête noire* in the world of journalism and politics was the late Spencer Leigh Hughes, afterwards a Member of Parliament, but at that time a daily paragraphist on the *Morning Leader*, in which he wrote under the pseudonym of "Sub Rosa." His column was mainly devoted to attacking the Conservative Party in general, and any member of it who had a title in particular. Satire and ridicule, especially pointed with family and personal references, were the weapons which he used. During my first Election campaign in 1904, after making fun of my youth and inexperience, he proceeded to deny that I was, as I claimed, a Sussex man. He said that I was of mixed Irish and Scottish descent, and went on to make derogatory remarks about my mother's family, and referred to their nickname—"The Hungry Hamiltons." Whenever a Cecil or a Cavendish or a Stanley was mentioned, some allusion was added to the alleged delinquencies of his ancestors. The picture which he tried to paint was one in which the Conservative Party would appear as a collection of half-witted degenerates, descended from a long line of plundering ancestors. The Radical Party considered him to be one of their cleverest

journalists; many of his paragraphs were amusing, but most of them were also spiteful and unfair. For some reason (which perhaps I should have regarded as a tribute to my activities in the House of Commons) he paid more attention to me than to most of the Conservative Bank Benchers. When I became Editor of *The World* he was the only journalist who made wounding and injurious comments.

I determined that I would pay him back in his own coin; for several weeks I systematically attacked him in *The World*. I asked why he had not the courage to write under his own name. I said that his almost insane hatred of anyone with a title was clearly due to some rebuff which he had received in his own social aspirations. I ridiculed his invective and his satire, and suggested that some of it had been copied almost word for word from Thackeray's "Book of Snobs," and from the works of other authors. When he stood at a bye-election, I recalled the fact that he had already been defeated twice before, and rejected as a candidate by more than one Liberal Association. I said that his nickname ought to be "Jonah." Whatever may be said of my counter-attack, it had the merit of causing his attacks on me to cease, and henceforth "Sub Rosa" never mentioned me.

Leslie Ward did us a series of cartoons of celebrated actors, and on several occasions I went with him to the theatre and behind the stage when he was studying his subjects. Together we visited the dressing-rooms of the late Sir Herbert Tree, the late Mr. Arthur Bouchier and Mr. George Grossmith.

I attended the first night of Tree's presentation of *Henry VIII*. Bouchier was the King, Tree played the part of Cardinal Wolsey, Miss Violet Vanbrugh that of

Katherine, and Miss Laura Cowie was Anne Boleyn. The play was staged and produced in lavish fashion. The highbrow critics described it as not Shakespearian at all, but Treearian. I think that the rather barbaric magnificence of it all fitted the men and the period about which Shakespeare was writing. After the performance there was a supper-party in the theatre, at which I was fortunate enough to be placed between Miss Viola Tree and Miss Laura Cowie.

Tree was in great form; he made a speech in which he referred to each of those present by name, and gave a short personal history of them. Among the guests was a certain Jew who had recently been made a Baronet. He was a friend of Tree's, but had contrived somehow, I think, to offend him, for our host said, "Finally, among our guests is a member of our very newest aristocracy; I need hardly say I refer to Sir, or is it Lord ——? I hope he will not be too proud henceforth to recognise his old friends."

Once when Tree was reproducing *Trilby*, and I went into his room between the Acts, his make-up was so good that I felt I was in the presence of the sinister and hypnotic Svengali himself. I was quite alarmed, and my hands shook as I took up my whisky and soda. "What is the matter?" said Tree: "you looked frightened." I told him that I had always considered Svengali to be one of the most horrible characters in literature, and that he did not merely look the part, but seemed to be Svengali. "My boy," said Tree, "you have paid me a great compliment. I *am* Svengali from the first moment that the curtain goes up, until it goes down in the last Act. I am Svengali as much in here as on the stage." Nothing said of Tree by his admirers exaggerates his powers as a

raconteur, nor the qualities which made him, in private life, an agreeable and witty companion.

After eighteen months of editorship, I sold my share of *The World* and resigned. This I did partly because of a disagreement with the principal proprietor, my partner, but also because I felt that the work still required to restore *The World* to prosperity would entail too great a strain on me, if I was to continue to be an active member of the House of Commons at a time of intense political controversy and excitement.



## CHAPTER X

King Edward VII's last Derby—A dinner to Mr. Asquith—Back in Austria—Gerlos—Chamois-shooting—Vienna—The spirit of the eighteenth century—The Jockey Club—Sachers—The Bristol—Munshi Sternberg—A flight by Monsieur Blériot before the Emperor Franz Josef—Night life in Vienna—Dawn on the Stefans Platz—Austria behind the veil—Mr. Wickham Steed and the future.

DURING the summer of 1909, the task of editing a weekly newspaper—in which I wrote some of the leaders, and many of the paragraphs—and attending proceedings in the House, which often lasted until four, five or six in the morning, involved a fairly heavy strain. In consequence, I did not go very much into society. But I recollect dining on Derby night that year with the late Lord Farquhar in Grosvenor Square. The Queen was present, and afterwards the King came on from the dinner which it was customary for the Sovereign to give to the Jockey Club on the night of the race. He had won the Derby, and looked supremely happy and in the best of health. It was the last time that I ever saw King Edward, for within less than a year he was dead.

I also remember another dinner that summer, which illustrates a quality peculiar to British political relationships. It was given by F. E. Smith and me at the House of Commons. The guests included Mrs. Smith,<sup>1</sup> the Duchess of Marlborough,<sup>2</sup> Miss Maxine Elliott, Miss

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Countess of Birkenhead.

<sup>2</sup> Now (1932) Madame Jacques Balsan.

Muriel Wilson,<sup>1</sup> Miss Clare Frewen,<sup>2</sup> Dr. L. S. Jameson, Mr. George Wyndham, General Seeley, Mr. Alfred Lyttelton, and the Prime Minister. At that time "F. E." was, save for Mr. Balfour, the Prime Minister's most formidable opponent; George Wyndham and Alfred Lyttelton were two very persistent critics of the Government on the Opposition Front Bench, while I was easily the most obstreperous Member of the Conservative Party in the House. The dinner took place at the height of the Lloyd Georgian Budget controversy.

In no other country in Europe would a Prime Minister have been on terms of such friendship with opponents as to permit of his dining with them in public.

In October I went for a holiday in Austria, to stay with my friend, the late Major Walter Waring, M.P., who at that time occupied a property known as Gerlos near Zell-um-Ziller, which was noted for the chamois-shooting to be obtained there.

In those days in order to get to Zell-um-Ziller by train, one had to travel to Jenbach on the main Basle-Vienna line, and thence to Zell-um-Ziller in a sort of steam tram. The only other occupants of its long, open coach, besides my servant and I, were an Austrian peasant woman and her son, a handsome little boy of about five years of age, with very fair hair and blue eyes. Somewhat to the embarrassment of his mother, he made great friends with me, and was obviously delighted when I showed him some English picture papers; during our journey of over an hour he sat by me and talked unceasingly; what it was all about I do not know, as I cannot understand German, but I was favourably impressed by the attitude of respect and admiration which

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Mrs. Warde.

<sup>2</sup> Now (1932) Mrs. Sheridan.

he adopted towards me ! When I got to know Austrians better, I discovered that this child epitomised the qualities of his race—charm, good looks, good manners, together with an admiration for England, and often a complete inability to make the English understand them.

In late July and early August 1914, my smart friends in London who, like me, knew Austria, used to say, "Why on earth are the Austrians behaving as they are, considering that they like us, and we like them, as no other two nations in Europe?" I used to reply, "Why do any of our friends in private life who are proud and incapable, as well as charming, often behave with such maddening idiocy? Because they are what they are. So with the Austrians."

At Zell-um-Ziller I found Waring's forester waiting for me, which was as well, since no one else in the little mountain town spoke English or French. I spent the night at a tiny and scrupulously clean inn. My bed had the biggest and softest feather mattress which I have ever seen, but, unfortunately, I was unable to sleep much owing to what appeared to be a non-stop yodelling contest which went on all night.

Gerlos is about nine miles from Zell-um-Ziller, and next day we went there on foot, with three pack-horses for our baggage. There followed for me three or four days of great delight, after strenuous months of politics and journalism.

The lodge, as its equivalent would be called in Scotland, was a plain wooden structure set in the midst of lovely mountain scenery; the cook and housekeeper was a very pretty girl called Lisl, the daughter of a former head forester. Her brother, Zeppl, was my guide and loader. Lisl cooked plain but very good food

—mostly mountain trout, various egg dishes, and chamois venison.

Higher in the hills, nearer the actual shooting-ground, was a hut in which Waring, his four or five other guests, and I slept two nights, as it would have been too far to walk to the drives from the lodge. The hut had two rooms, one for the guests and the other for the foresters. In each was a number of wooden bunks full of hay, set one above the other; in these we slept, wrapped in great-coats and blankets. In those days Austrian sportsmen used to be astonished when told of the comforts and amenities of Scottish shooting-boxes. They said, with some truth, that the simpler and more strenuous life which they led, when after game or fish in summer, was both healthier and more sportsman-like. Certainly one felt exceedingly well, walking hard all day in the hot sun, amid wonderful scenery, breathing the purest of mountain air, and coming home to a simple one-course dinner of local produce, washed down by mountain water and kummel, followed by deep sleep, among fragrant hay, in a wooden bunk.

In summer the chamois were driven to the rifles at Gerlos. A deer drive in Scotland is usually considered a tame sort of sport. No one could say that of these chamois drives at Gerlos. I remember one in particular. We tramped up and up until we were above the snow-line; we sat precariously on the topmost ledge of a precipitous hill, with a sheer drop of hundreds of feet below us to a dank and gloomy glen. If anyone had slipped, he would have fallen headlong, to be dashed to pieces below. As I have a bad head for height, Zeppl sat behind me, holding the ends of a strap which was round my waist. The chamois, driven by the

beaters—who had to walk for five hours over a big area of country in a gradually decreasing half-circle—appeared in ones and twos over the sky-line of the towering hill across the glen. They would jump on to a crag or ledge, and stop for a moment to look and listen. Then was the time to train the sights of one's rifle on them. As there were five rifles lining the top of the glen, it was practically impossible for a chamois to be wounded and left to die, so that the sport was as humane as any other form of shooting. It was intensely exciting to sit there, poised precariously on a small, jutting-out piece of rock, waiting for a chamois to come over the opposite hill. It is the custom in Austria, when anyone has shot his first chamois, to put the tufted end of a pine-branch in his hat. When I left Jenbach for Vienna, proudly wearing this token in my felt hat, I received congratulations from the head waiter and several others in the restaurant car, who said to me in English that it was a pleasure to see an Englishman successful in one of the Austrian national sports.

Pre-war Vienna, and Austria in general, was in spirit a survival of the eighteenth century; Metternich, had he returned to earth in 1909, though he would have deplored the weakness and incapacity of many of his successors among Austrian statesmen, would thoroughly have approved the attitude and manner of life of the Emperor and of the aristocracy, who lived exactly as their ancestors had lived. The events of 1789 in France, or 1848 in their own country, had not shaken their supreme confidence in the permanence of their order. They married entirely within that order, and there was, at least in the case of the older families, none of that infiltration of blood from other sources which has always

been at once the strength and the peculiarity of every section of English society.

The men, when young, as a matter of course sowed their wild oats in Vienna or Budapest. Not to do so was to come under suspicion of having unpleasant or sinister traits. After marriage they usually became the best of husbands and fathers, and would be content to spend eight or nine months of domestic felicity every year on their vast estates, living in gloomy and uncomfortable castles, and making bags of pheasants or partridges of such gigantic dimensions that no English host of King Edward VII could hope to emulate them. The rest of the year they would spend in Vienna, or, if they had Hungarian connections, in Budapest. Here they entertained, and were entertained by, their own class at very decorous dinner-parties and balls. They went racing (both Austrians and Hungarians are very fond of horses) and lost, or won, incredible sums at play. It is said that a member of the Potocki family once lost £100,000 in a single game of baccarat at the Jockey Club in Vienna, and then went home to get the title-deeds of one of his princely estates in order to wager them. I myself have seen huge sums change hands at the game in the Jockey Club. Here you could taste the very essence of the eighteenth century; you found enormous rooms, with the thickest of carpets and heaviest of curtains, excellent food, and a silently efficient service carried out by men-servants in gorgeous livery. Though there was an atmosphere of friendliness and camaraderie in the Club, unlike that of the exaggerated punctiliousness and pomposity of similar establishments in Germany, no member, young or old, ever took a liberty, in manner or conversation, with

another member. "Here," said a British diplomat to me one day, "you see the good influence of duelling; in this country duelling is not, as in France, a farcical survival of an aristocratic tradition in a bourgeois age. In Austria-Hungary people frequently get killed in duels. You will observe that the standard of manners is higher than in a London club. It doesn't pay to be rude if it may involve your death. Ragging in the army, such as we have at home (this was said just after one of the so-called "ragging scandals" in the Guards), would be impossible here. If a young officer were ragged by his brother-officers, he would call them out one after the other and, if he was a better swordsman than they were, kill each one of them in turn."

When playing baccarat it was against etiquette to betray signs of elation or depression, however great your winnings or losings might be. In this aristocratic impassivity, I thought, as I watched them one evening, you have the explanation of the training which enabled the French aristocrats to face unmoved the horrid exultations of the revolutionary mob, and the guillotine itself.

The fact that they were good sportsmen, in the true sense of the word, fond of country life, unaffected in manner, and uninterested in intellectual discussion, made it easy for Austrian men of this class to get on with the same class of Englishmen. They instinctively trusted and understood each other, just as both, as a rule, disliked and distrusted the cynical, quick-witted, town-loving Frenchman of their class. "I wonder why it is," an English "*Milord*" once said to me, "that an Austrian on his own property in the country always looks like a country gentleman, whereas a Frenchman

on his, looks like a Frenchman; his clothes are all wrong, and so are his wife's?" It was a delightfully English point of view. I did not like to tell my friend that the clothes of his wife (a typical pre-war English-woman), in the crudity of design, colour and cut, and with their chaste hint of flannel next the skin, would look "all wrong" in a Paris salon, or indeed anywhere else where women dressed well.

It might be inferred from what I have written that the Austrian aristocracy was purely Philistine in its outlook. But this was not so; some members of it, such as Harrach, Lanckoroński, Czernin, had wonderful collections of pictures, armour and books in which they took the deepest interest; to-day many of these are open to the public.

The Austrian nobility shared with other classes of Austrians a love for, and pride in, the Opera House of Vienna and its glorious traditions. Production of opera there was, and is, among the best in the world, its only rivals, in Europe, being at Milan and Munich. All the terrible vicissitudes through which Vienna has passed since 1914 have not affected the quality of the orchestra. In 1928, in company with my wife and some friends, I went to *Turandot* at the Opera. Count Mensdorf, who was of the party, said to me that he believed the orchestra owed its excellence to certain hereditary qualities; many of the members of it were the third or fourth of their line to play in it, and the instruments had descended from father to son. What has altered is the composition of the audience. Instead of the wonderful uniforms and glorious jewels of old, you see a rather shabby-looking gathering. However, whatever their station in life, Viennese women usually contrive to look



delightful. Perhaps the mixture of races there produces the wonderful colouring of their hair and skin, their graceful figures and general charm.

Whatever the reason for their beauty, they make a vivid impression on a young and impressionable Englishman, going there for the first time. On my visit in 1909, I contrived to fall respectfully but deeply in love alternately with a lovely Austrian Countess and her even more lovely daughter. Etiquette, coupled with a certain native caution, prevented me from giving any definite outward manifestation of my fickle devotion, but I think that both mother and daughter, at the Opera, at supper afterwards at Sachers, or at the Bristol, were slightly puzzled to know why one day I was so anxious to sit next to one of them, and the next day to the other!

Sachers and the Bristol had the only restaurants in Vienna to which *jeunes filles* could be taken. Sachers was, and remained until the death of its owner—Frau Sacher—a year or two ago, a unique institution. Frau Sacher took over the ownership and management after the death of her husband, whom she survived by, I think, some thirty years. In the Augustinerstrasse, behind the Opera, the exterior of Sachers was undistinguished, its interior was cramped, and its dining-room of unsurpassed hideousness, both as to furniture and decoration; its walls were covered with deers' antlers; the food and wine were good, but not conspicuously so. Nevertheless, Sachers had a distinction which no other restaurant in Europe possessed. No one was allowed in that little, cramped coffee-room (you could hardly call it a restaurant) of whom Frau Sacher did not approve. How she kept them out was her secret and her business. A great lady whom I know,

married into one of the oldest and wealthiest families in Europe, once complained to Frau Sacher that her room at the hotel had not been properly dusted, and that the servants were very noisy outside in the passage in the morning. From then onwards, whenever my friend wrote or telegraphed to order rooms for herself or her family, she was informed that there were none vacant.

To Sachers came Archdukes, diplomats, members of every noble family in Austria and Hungary, journalists, politicians, and everyone of importance in Vienna. It was said that Frau Sacher was the repository of every diplomatic, political and amatory secret that mattered.

In later years, after the War, she became more of an autocrat than ever, and rather eccentric to boot. If anything went wrong in kitchen or pantry, she would sail into the dining-room and indiscriminately box the ears of every waiter in sight. It was rumoured that certain gay young Austrian sparks would bribe a waiter to drop a plate in order to see Frau Sacher attack him with her vigorous arms. Nevertheless, in the terrible years of Austria's bankruptcy, Frau Sacher showed infinite kindness and compassion to some of her old aristocratic customers who were starving; she insisted on them having their meals without payment in her hotel, and would often give them money as well. Once a year Frau Sacher, draped in the habiliments of woe, would leave the hotel, obviously bound for a cemetery, and carrying an enormous wreath. Two or three years before she died, a friend of mine, an Austrian diplomat of ancient lineage and great social importance, presuming somewhat on long-standing friendship, said to Frau Sacher on this anniversary that it was wonderful, in this heartless post-war era, to find such touching re-

membrance for a long-dead husband. Frau Sacher looked at him coldly, said nothing for a moment, and then remarked that it was, "*fur den alten Herr*"—*Der alte Herr* was, I believe, one of the "first violins" at the Opera.

The Bristol was also very characteristic in its way. It was an old-fashioned establishment in some respects; but very comfortable, and the food—I remember in particular its *sôle Bristol*—excellent. The restaurant was that epitome of respectability which it had to be for the *jeunes filles bien élevées* of Vienna to be allowed to visit it with their mammas. But the bar, in another quarter of the building, was more bohemian, though its bohemianism was select. Here, in the years when I knew Vienna, at the hour of the *apéritif* in the season, you would be certain to find a sprinkling of jockeys and trainers, foreign newspaper correspondents, *attachés* from the British and American Embassies, and Count Munshi Sternberg. The presiding genius of the place, who kept strict order, was a genuine blonde, of Junoesque appearance, called Wilhelmina. At least, that was the name by which I always heard her called, though I suppose she had a surname. Wilhelmina knew all the gossip of the town, and joined in the voluble conversation that went on round the counter, but she always kept her place, and allowed no licentiousness in language or behaviour.

Munshi Sternberg, like Sachers, was unique. During the South African War he fought with the Boers against us, and was taken prisoner; after the peace of Vereeniging he came to England and was mildly lionised, mainly on account of a sort of impudent charm; he met and got on well with Lord Rosebery and Mr. Balfour. Returning to Austria, he became a member of the Reichsrat and a

frequent contributor to the Press. Though in reality very good-humoured, he had a violent temper, and a completely unbridled tongue when in a rage. He was in scene after scene in Parliament, and finally got into serious trouble for an unprintable reference to the Austrian flag, which, as a Hungarian, he detested. In consequence of this behaviour he was requested to resign his membership of the Jockey Club; he did so, but called out all the members of the Committee. Since his conduct had made him a social outcast, the Committee declined his challenge. A few years later, the Emperor decided to re-admit Sternberg to Court, either because the latter had apologised, or because he thought that Sternberg's undoubted talents in politics and journalism would be better employed for, than against the Throne. In consequence, Sternberg was re-elected to the Jockey Club. He promptly issued again a challenge to all who were members of the Committee when he was asked to resign; accompanying the challenge was a statement that since he was now once more admitted to be a man of honour, he was sure that the Committee would be prepared to give him the chance of avenging the affront previously offered him. However, the matter was eventually settled amicably.

Sternberg had an intellectual industry, and an insight into politics and economics, very rare in men of his order in Austria and in Hungary. Most of the Austrian nobility were as insensitive to the internal and external dangers of their country's policy as were the French *noblesse* before 1789. Perhaps it was the contiguity of Russia which caused the ruling classes in the dual monarchy utterly to ignore how anachronistic was their feudalism. When one of their number did show some

interest in national affairs, and make an attempt to understand the man-in-the-street, he met with instant popularity, even though he might be an eccentric *bon-viveur*.

I went with Sternberg to see an exhibition of flying by Monsieur Blériot. It was the first exhibition flight which had ever taken place in Vienna, and, incidentally, the first time I had ever seen an aeroplane in the air. The road to the ground where the flight took place was crowded with every sort of vehicle, and during our journey every other person seemed to recognise and greet Sternberg; he was clearly delighted that I was afforded such evidence of his popularity.

When we reached the ground, we went into the reserved enclosure, only a few yards from where the Emperor Franz Josef stood by himself in a space clear of spectators. Round the immense parade-ground, which made an ideal aerodrome, was massed, almost as far as one could see, a huge concourse of spectators, as numerous as a Derby-day crowd, though noticeably silent and expectant. It was a dull, windless, lowering day, without a glimpse or hint of sunshine. The old Emperor, grey, rather bent, with his lined face, stood motionless in his long, military cloak, and gave an impression of complete isolation.

Blériot made an admirable landing a couple of hundred yards or so in front of us. As he got out of his machine to walk towards the Emperor, the massed bands of the regiments in the garrison of Vienna crashed into the *Marseillaise*. Blériot stopped, hat in hand, and the vast assembly was hatless and motionless also. Then, when the tune was finished, he advanced again. He was presented to the Emperor, who stepped forward a pace

or two and shook hands with him. Once again the upturned baton of the bandmaster came down, this time to conduct the glorious tune of the Austrian National Anthem. It was an inspiring moment, but the juxtaposition of the two tunes had, alas! no political significance.

Vienna was a gay place in the evening and through the small hours of the morning. Its night life differed from that of Paris, in being mainly for the Viennese themselves, and not for foreigners. At one or two in the morning, you would see family-parties, often with quite small children, listening at some popular resort to the excellent Viennese and Tzigane orchestras, which played alternately and continuously. The former usually rendered waltzes and other works by the younger Strauss or Franz Lehar, but occasionally more serious music; and the latter, a variety of Hungarian folk and gipsy songs. The family-parties, and the audience generally, were content to sit for hours, almost without moving, in rapt and blissful appreciation of the music. A cup of coffee, or a glass of beer per person was all that, by custom, you were required to order from the restaurant. This was in pleasant contrast to the exorbitant charges for the often undrinkable *champagne obligatoire* of Montmartre.

Though I never saw any of it, I was told that the night-life of Berlin was even more expensive than that of Paris, and in those days vulgar and blatant to a degree. Save in the case of one famous pre-war dance band in London, I have never heard Viennese waltzes properly rendered except in Vienna; for even at the less fashionable midnight resorts they were magnificently played. I think that the audiences had something to do with it. Vienna expresses the very spirit of the waltz.

On the first night that I went out in Vienna I expressed surprise to an Austrian friend at the number of obviously very respectable middle-class men and women and their children who were to be found long after midnight in the cafés and restaurants. He explained that if you went into your flat after ten o'clock you had to pay a due to the *concierge* for each person, and another higher due after twelve, which held good until 6 a.m. A frugal Austrian with a large family, who wanted to take them to the theatre, could save money on these dues by sitting up all night in a café or restaurant, if he ordered no more than the minimum required by custom. In addition, he and his were hearing what they loved best in the world—the light, sugary music of their native town.

There were, of course, all sorts and conditions of night resorts. There was Ronachers, a huge music-hall, whose programme lasted well after midnight, where you could have supper in the auditorium. There was a smaller music-hall, called the Parisien, where the performances began about midnight. Then there were the Trocadéro, the Fredenblatt, the Fledermaus, Maxims, the Casino de Paris, and many others. In most of these there were the two types of band to which I have referred, and, at intervals, songs sung by men or women, as well as dances by ballet-girls, usually very well and decorously performed. In some, the audience themselves danced the waltzes played by the band.

One night I went to a play with two friends in the diplomatic service; it began and ended very late, and when it was over we had supper at the Bristol. Afterwards, having seen far too many dawns from the terrace of the House of Commons that summer, I was anxious

to go to bed, but my friends induced me to accompany them to a restaurant where one could dance until 4 a.m. When we arrived it was nearly that hour, but my host, who was a well-known figure in Vienna, insisted on the proprietor keeping his establishment open until six. When at last we all emerged into the Stephans Platz, the first faint rays of dawn were visible behind the great spire of St. Stephan's. It was a cold, frosty morning; stars glistened in the sky, but immediately overhead was a small, grey cloud from which a few flakes of snow were slowly falling. The arc-lamps shone on us, bringing into sharp relief the slender figures of the dancing-girls in their fur coats; their young and pretty faces looked pathetically tired under their powder and rouge. The swarthy and hirsute members of the Tzigane band, wearing every sort of hat and coat, resembled a company of brigands who had just left their cave. The cook and his assistants seemed bright and cheerful at sniffing the morning air, after spending eight hours of the night underground.

As we parted, on the pavement, to go to our respective homes, a company of soldiers, in brilliant uniform, swung by on their way to guard-changing. On the opposite side of the road numbers of shaggy-looking peasants, in picturesque and baggy clothes, and boots reaching to their knees, who were grouped about the stalls of a market, just about to open, eyed us with disdain and dislike. Innumerable bells were ringing in all the churches of the city. The whole scene would have made a setting for a Russian ballet, and it all came vividly back to me when, more than twenty years later, I saw Noel Coward's *Bitter Sweet*.



My primary object in going to Vienna was to find a correspondent for *The World*, and also to get as much information as I could about Austrian internal and foreign policy. I had letters of introduction to, among others, Mr. Wickham Steed, then correspondent of *The Times* in Vienna, and afterwards its Editor.

I went, one cold October day, to see Mr. Steed in his flat, and spent an hour listening, enthralled, to a vivid and arresting exposition by him of the policy of the Dual Monarchy and the condition of the two countries.

He began by paying a tribute to the hospitality and charm of the Austrian and the Hungarian peoples. He then went on to say that beneath the apparent lightness and gaiety of life on the surface, in Vienna was much poverty and economic hardship, as well as a police control as rigorous in essentials as in Germany. The system in the two countries was different, but the policy the same. In Germany the police were openly overbearing, and often brutal; in Austria the method was that of the iron hand in the velvet glove. Amusements of all kinds were encouraged as an opiate and, superficially, the police seemed to tolerate everything; but every word or act hostile to the existing régime was noted and punished, either by legal or illegal means, whenever the authorities could safely do so. The police spy system was perfect, and he described how he had been shadowed, his correspondence watched and, he suspected, attempts made to ransack his desk. When I asked why this should be so, Steed replied that, as correspondent of *The Times*, he was far too important a person, in the estimation of the Chief of Police, to be allowed to pursue his lawful business without being watched. He said

that, despite its ostensible independence, the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Office was very much at the service of the Wilhelmstrasse, as were several Viennese newspapers. He mentioned that leading articles were sometimes telephoned from Berlin word for word for insertion in the papers like the *Neues Wiener Tageblatt* and the *Neue Freie Presse*. Finally, he made this striking and prophetic declaration :

“ When the great European crisis comes, as I fear it will come about 1915, because by then the German Navy will be ready, you will find that the Austro-Hungarian Government will not only be on the side of Germany, but fully as bellicose and aggressive as that country. What the ostensible cause of war will be, I don't know, but probably some incident in the Balkans, or the Mediterranean. Whether war comes or not, the present system of government cannot continue. All the outward gaiety and charm of this country rest on a quaking bog. You have recently been going into Viennese society. I tell you that the people with whom you have dined and danced will one day be begging their bread in the streets. They are in the position of the French aristocrats before 1789, and they are as blind to events as were the latter.”

When the interview was over, I had the same feeling of depression as I had had when I was at Kiel the previous year. War! I kept thinking to myself. Is the fiercest political struggle at home which we have had for two generations or more but a prelude to a conflict, beside which the Budget fight and the coming crisis when the Lords reject the Bill will be but an Aldershot sham-fight?

Shall I, and others of my generation, soon be fighting, not with words only, but with deadly weapons in our hands? Are we to pass the next few years amid the crashing of the whole European system?

In this mood I returned to England, via Berlin, but determined to come east again the following year.

## CHAPTER XI

The Lords reject the Budget—Prime Minister's Motion in House of Commons—The Election of January 1910—The Parliament Bill—Death of King Edward VII—The Constitutional Conference—The Honble. C. T. Mills, M.P.—Sir Ian Malcolm—The Orient Express—Visit to Constantinople—The Committee of Union and Progress—Sir Gerard Lowther—Colonel Auberon Herbert—Mr. Pellegrini—Broussa—The Anatolian peasant—Yenidje—A meeting of the local branch of the C.U.P. —Bilejik —Bucharest —Sinaia —Prince and Princess Georges Bibesco—Budapest—Stübing—Vienna—Apponyi.

WHEN I got back to England, the Finance Bill (the famous Lloyd George Budget) was going through its Report Stage. It had been no less than forty-two days in Committee, the last day being October 6th. There was then an adjournment of the House (the first since Whitsuntide) for ten days. The Report Stage lasted from October 18th until the end of the month, and the Bill was read a third time on November 4th. The House then adjourned again until November 23rd.

On the 30th November the House of Lords refused a second reading of the Bill by three hundred and fifty votes to seventy-five, and passed a resolution at the same time as follows :

“That this House is not justified in giving its consent to this Bill until it has been submitted to the judgment of the country.”

This was the occasion of the famous mass attack of the “backwoodsmen” on the Bill. Many of the Peers

who voted had never done so before, or even been in the Chamber, except to take the oath.

Amusing, but entirely apocryphal, stories were told of them; some were said to be dressed in high cravats, tight-buttoned blue frock-coats and beaver hats, never seen in 1909, except at fancy-dress balls. The reason for this, it was added, was that the wearers had not been to London since they came to support the Duke over reform in 1832. One peer was alleged to have tried to vote in the Lobby of the House, and to have given as a reason that he did not know that there were two Chambers in Parliament. Another, who was slightly eccentric, could only be induced to enter the "No" lobby if his male nurse went in front, shaking a rattle and blowing a tin trumpet.

On December 1st the Prime Minister, in the House of Commons, gave notice of a motion in the following terms :

"That the action of the House of Lords, in refusing to pass into law the financial provisions made by this House for the service of the year, is a breach of the Constitution, and an usurpation of the rights of the Commons."

The motion was moved next day, and carried in an excited House. Mr. Asquith spoke in sonorous and rhetorical language, of which the following is an example:

"The House of Commons would, in the judgment of His Majesty's Government, be unworthy of its past, and of the traditions of which it is the custodian and the trustee, if it allowed another day to pass without making it clear that it does not mean

to brook the greatest indignity, and I will add the most arrogant usurpation, to which, for more than two centuries, it has been asked to submit.”

Judged purely from an intellectual and dialectical standard, the speech was a fine one; unfortunately for him and his Party, the moral indignation which he showed was not shared by the electors. The Government lost over one hundred seats at the January Election, and came back dependent upon Irish Nationalist and Socialist votes for an effective majority.

There is little doubt that the Government never expected so damaging a result. It thought that the tremendous accumulation of prejudice and passion which it had carefully piled up against the peers would, when set alight, blow them sky high. Nor were many of us very confident about the decision in our own constituencies at the beginning of the Election. I had as opponent an Australian, the late Mr. Outhwaite, who had once stood against Mr. Chamberlain in Birmingham. Though nominally a Liberal, he was, in his sympathies, a Socialist, and eventually joined the Labour Party. He was a hard and bitter fighter, and in the early stages of the contest some of my leading supporters told me, in private, that they thought I was losing. But, nevertheless, I got a majority of over 2,700, which was then a record for my constituency. Since those days I have had a majority of over 38,000!

The result of the election was to leave the Government in a dilemma. The Irish Nationalists were openly hostile to many provisions in the Budget; Mr. John Redmond had said that it was bad and oppressive, and would put a cruel and additional burden on the people

of Ireland. On the other hand, the Irish were in favour of the Government's expressed intention to deal with the question of the veto of the House of Lords; but they desired, and indeed insisted in their private negotiations with the Government, that its policy should be of a more far-reaching and revolutionary character than that proposed. They wanted the veto abolished, in order to pass a Home Rule for Ireland Bill.

The debate on the Address took place in an atmosphere of unreality, since at any rate informal discussions in regard to the fate of the Budget and the plan for the Lords were in progress between the Government and the Irish. In particular, Mr. Redmond wanted guarantees from the Crown that, if necessary, there would be a creation of sufficient new peers to carry any Bill sent to the Upper House.

Since neither of the historic parties had a majority, we were not anxious to force the pace too much by action, as a second election would have been likely only to prolong the stalemate.

However, we were free, as the Government was not, to say what we thought. Mr. F. E. Smith, who had done more than any man to win seats for the Party, and was now a member of the Opposition Front Bench, delivered a smashing attack on the Liberals during the debate on the Address. Mr. Winston Churchill, quick to sense the difference between the new House and the old, was mild and almost conciliatory in reply.

At last the Government, after adopting an unusual and temporary procedure to collect revenue, decided on its policy as a result of the negotiations. The famous Lloyd George Budget was once again passed through the House with slight amendments, and accepted, as

everyone knew it would be in the altered circumstances, in April by the Lords.

In March the Government had brought forward resolutions on which to found its Veto Bill. These were passed after strenuous opposition by us, and the free use of the closure amid growing tension and anxiety in the country, and private expressions of opinion by Foreign Ambassadors to their Governments that England was approaching revolution.

The Veto resolutions having been passed, the Government brought in its Bill, but before the second reading the whole course of events was altered by the death of King Edward. He had been unwell for some time, but his death was hastened, it was said—with what truth I do not know—by the deep anxiety which he felt about the national situation.

King Edward, as Head of the State, suffered from indiscriminating adulation during his reign, and since his death his reputation has been subjected, in some quarters, to very biassed and even cynical criticism. The flatterers attributed to King Edward a power and influence in foreign affairs which, though possessed in theory by the Crown, had not been exercised for generations, and could not have been used without grave risk of conflict with Parliament. Those who built up this legend of direct action by King Edward did harm in several ways: they most unfairly detracted from the credit which belonged to his two Foreign Ministers, Lord Lansdowne and Sir Edward Grey, for acts of policy which strengthened and stabilised Great Britain's position; they aroused suspicions which were voiced in such incidents as the debate on the Reval meeting, to which I have referred in an earlier chapter; they have assisted



enemies of this country in their task of blackening the King's character. Had the admirers of King Edward VII confined themselves to saying that His Majesty's influence on foreign relations had always been indirect, but nevertheless both beneficial and widespread, they would have said no more and no less than the truth. Where they erred was in suggesting that his personal views had a direct and decisive effect on the trend and nature of our foreign friendships and commitments.

There is a school of young writers who have, since the War, taken delight in sneering at King Edward, and at his associates, and at their outlook. One suggestion made is that the King owed his popularity solely to certain failings which the British people condemn in public, but commend and envy in private. This is an outrageous and malicious falsehood. It is true that the King's obvious enjoyment of racing, of the company of pretty women and of amusing and agreeable men, of good wine and cooking and cigars was approved by that very large section of the population which is in open or covert revolt against a traditional puritanism; but his hold on his subjects was due to reasons of a more substantial character. They admired him for his devotion to the duties of his high office, his immense regard for the welfare of the sick poor, and his valuable work in this connection, his judicious mixture of affability and dignity, his *savoir faire*, and his knowledge of, and allowance for, human nature.

No British sovereign, not even Queen Victoria herself, was more generally mourned than he when he died. Nor was his popularity in France a mere legend of the journalists. Just after his death I went motoring with some friends in that country. Hotel-keepers, shopmen

and the like, in casual conversation with me, more than once mentioned the loss which his death was to the French nation, as well as to us. A barber at Rouen who was shaving me said, "*Il était le plus Français des Rois, le plus Parisien des Anglais.*"

When one recalls the century-old misunderstandings between our nearest neighbours and ourselves, and the bloodshed and confusion that those misunderstandings have entailed, it was surely no small matter for the Constitutional Monarch of the British people to have achieved a personal friendship with the French people. Nor was this wholly due to common distrust and dislike of the German Emperor. The French liked and understood King Edward because he liked and understood them.

The best tribute that I heard paid to the King was that of Mr. Asquith—a master of happy phraseology—"He was an enfranchised citizen of the world."

The King's death, for the time, altered the whole political scene. It would have been indecent immediately after the death of the Sovereign to have debated the Parliament Bill amid fierce recrimination. It would have been, in the highest degree, unfair to King George to bring to a head in the early days of his reign an issue which might easily involve the Crown in the most difficult and momentous political decisions to be taken since the Reform Bill. Consequently, what Mr. Garvin picturesquely described as "A Truce of God" was arranged. A Constitutional Conference was formed to see if any bridge could be built to span the huge gulf between the Liberal and Conservative Parties on the subject of the Parliament Bill. The Conference sat all through the summer of 1910, and meanwhile Parlia-

mentary warfare was virtually in suspense, though the House of Commons sat to deal with necessary financial and non-contentious business.

I spent the summer working hard for *The World*. I also commanded a squadron of my Yeomanry during the annual fortnight's training in August. We were brigaded with the West Kent and Surrey Yeomanry regiments, and took part, for the first time, in Territorial Divisional manœuvres on the downs round Eastbourne and Brighton. As most of the officers of the other two regiments were old friends and contemporaries of members of our Officers' Mess, we had great fun, as well as much hard work. Four years later, almost to a day, we were again to be brigaded together for a sterner purpose.

In September I started once again on my travels. My companion on this occasion was my great friend, Charlie Mills.<sup>1</sup> Charlie's death in France in 1915 was an irreparable loss to all who knew him. He had an influence on his generation of the same kind as that of Lord Irwin on his. He was a great Christian gentleman, in the truest sense of the term, but without a trace of priggishness or pomposity; for no Englishman whom I have ever met had such wonderful *joie de vivre* and sense of humour. His knowledge of affairs, shrewdness, common-sense and good judgment would have been of great value in the post-war years as a Member of the House of Commons, and as a banker; his death is only one of a thousand examples of the qualitative losses of the War which affected this and all European countries far more prejudicially (brutal as the statement of the fact may be) than the quantitative losses.

<sup>1</sup> The Honble. C. T. Mills, M.P. for Uxbridge, Lieutenant, Scots Guards. Killed in action in France, September 1915.

Charlie and I left Paris one evening by the Orient Express for Constantinople. Sir Ian Malcolm and another friend were on the train. There was in those days a harmless racing game called "Minoru," as popular in schoolroom as it was in drawing-room. I have forgotten the details of the game, but I recollect that it was played with counters and dice, which decided the moves of the various horses.

After dinner in the restaurant car, Charlie, Ian, his friend, and I played "Minoru" on a board recently given me. The cosmopolitan crowd on the Orient Express began to be interested, and soon one or two people left their seats and came and stood by our table. Unfortunately, this attracted the attention of the conductor, who came up and said brusquely and authoritatively that it was forbidden to gamble on trains in France, and that we were rendering ourselves liable to a heavy penalty. In vain I pointed out that we were not gambling, and that it was a perfectly innocent parlour game which we were playing; in spite of my protests at his treating three Members of Parliament in this way, he insisted on the game ending, and, to avoid a scene, we complied. It was clear from his attitude, then and subsequently, that he believed us to be a group of international card-sharpers.

The truth of Metternich's phrase that Asia "begins at the Landstrasse" is exemplified if you travel on the Orient Express, for very soon after leaving the Austrian capital you have a definite feeling of being in the East. It is partly the people, partly their mentality, clothes and habits, partly the architecture of the villages, and partly the animals, such as the domestic buffalo. The amalgam makes up the unmistakable East; some years ago, after

the War, I motored from Vienna to stay with my friend, Count Apponyi, in Czecho-Slovakia. In Vienna, and perhaps for fifteen miles further on, we were in Europe; then, almost imperceptibly, we drove into country that might have been in Palestine, or Turkey, or Egypt, or India, but was definitely not Europe. The smell, the squalor, and the picturesqueness of the villages were just the East.

I was not favourably impressed by what I saw of Serbia in my hurried train journey through it. The people looked savage and truculent, and were armed to the teeth. It was four years later that one of our statesmen during the War—Mr. Asquith, I think—coined the phrase “Gallant little Serbia.” Serbia, at the time of which I am writing, was little enough, but not generally considered gallant; since a few years before a number of officers of her “incomparable army” (to quote another war-time description very popular on British recruiting platforms) had cut up the Queen of Serbia into little bits, after previously murdering the King.

It was an interesting time to visit Turkey. Two years earlier the revolution had occurred, and at long last that clever old vulture, Abdul Hamid, had been overthrown. In his place was a Government controlled by the Committee of Union and Progress (C.U.P.)—a spawn of Salonican Jews. The presiding geniuses of the Committee were Enver and Talaat. Mustapha Kemal was, in those days, an obscure Army officer.

The C.U.P. Government was as autocratic and tyrannous in essence as the Hamidian régime. Armenians were openly, or surreptitiously, murdered, and political opponents of the Government put out of the way. Thin, however, as was the democratic façade, it was sufficient

to deceive our English Radicals. The Buxtons and others raised pæns of praise at the delivery of Turkey from tyranny and absolutism. The *Daily News* and *Daily Chronicle* were as joyously excited as they were a few years later at the overthrow of the Tzar. Before the War some members of the Liberal Government were fond of saying on platforms something like this: "I would instance Turkey and Portugal as two countries where the growth of liberal and progressive ideas has been most remarkable. Both were absolutist monarchies a few years ago. To-day they are both democratic republics (loud cheers from the audience). Will the Tory Party never learn from what is going on all around them in Europe?" etc., etc.

Unfortunately, the *bouleversement* in Turkey in 1908 did not improve our relations with that country. Germany had been the friend of the Sultan, whereas between us and the old régime there had been a distinct coolness. Opinion in Great Britain, so far as it took interest in Turkish affairs, had always been friendly to the aspirations of the "Young Turks" who made the revolution. When it succeeded, the latter and the Constantinople populace were enthusiastically pro-British.

Yet in a year or so Germany was as popular with the new régime as she had been with the old, and we were as unpopular. The culmination of this was disastrous, for, added to the escape of the *Goeben* and the *Breslau*, and the incredibly foolish seizure, in Britain in the early months of the War, of the Turkish dreadnought on the stocks, this anti-British feeling helped to bring Turkey into the War against us.

Why did we fail absolutely to use the advantage

which the revolution adventitiously brought us? In my judgment, for several reasons. The Germans had in Marschall von Bieberstein, their Ambassador at Constantinople, one of the cleverest diplomats in Europe. Our representatives in Constantinople either had no instructions to try to circumvent him, or failed to carry them out. In either event, Sir Edward Grey and his advisers cannot escape censure. It has always been my opinion that for all his charm, ability and intellectual honesty, Lord Grey's limited knowledge of men and affairs outside of Great Britain, or indeed outside of a limited circle in Great Britain, completely unfitted him to deal with such situations as arose in Turkey from 1908 to 1914. I remember once when blundering along a muddy trench in Gallipoli, just before the evacuation, a friend who was with me said, "Curse the War Office for sending us here." I replied, "Curse, on the other hand, Grey, and the fatheads of the Foreign Office. They sent us here by their incompetent handling of the Turks from 1908 on."

As a partner in Glyn, Mills, Currie & Co., Charlie Mills was received as an honoured guest by the Ottoman Bank authorities in Constantinople. They were exceedingly kind to us. Sir Gerard Lowther, the British Ambassador at Constantinople, and Lady Lowther, whom I had known for years, were most helpful and hospitable. Three of the attachés at the Embassy had been at Eton with me, so altogether we were well provided both with friends and sources of interesting and authoritative information. Among others we met was the famous Mr. Fitzmaurice, who had occupied an official position at the Embassy for years, and had the reputation of knowing more about the country than

any other Englishman. In later years he became, like Lawrence in Arabia, almost a legendary figure. When Turkey came into the War against us, a cynical friend of mine said that if only ten years earlier we had taken all the other members of the British Embassy away from Constantinople and left only Fitzmaurice there, she would have been on the Allies' side in the War. Inevitably also we found Aubrey Herbert<sup>1</sup> at Constantinople. You couldn't go east of Vienna in those days without finding Aubrey somewhere, though it was usually in much wilder places than Constantinople. We spent some time in the Pera Palace Hotel, and at Therapia, and did the usual things. We visited Sta. Sophia and the bazaars, rode in the lovely oak and Spanish-chestnut woods behind Therapia, and went out in *caïques* on the Bosphorus. Some days later we decided we would like to go for a trip on the Asiatic shore. After consulting our friends at the Embassy, we arranged to engage a guide, and finally selected Mr. Pellegrini, a Cypriot and a British subject. He was recommended to us by Aubrey Herbert, who had employed him. He possessed a good deal of the charming inconsequence of his patron.

We set out one morning about 6 a.m. from Therapia by boat. With Sta. Sophia and the Golden Horn glittering in the foreground under the first rays of the rising sun, the Bosphorus is almost more beautiful in the early morning than by moonlight. We changed steamers at Pera for our seven hours' journey to Mudania. There is always plenty of incident, even on the shortest voyage of a Turkish ship; on this occasion, just after leaving Galata quay, we were badly bumped by another,

<sup>1</sup> The late Lieut.-Colonel the Honble. Auberon Herbert, M.P.



and larger, steamer, and in our turn gave a shrewd smack amidships to a couple of barges. However, beyond adding one more large dent to the ancient plates of the wheezy old vessel, no harm was done, and we proceeded on our way, amid universal cursing from all the captains of all the craft in the vicinity, our own included.

Arrived at Mudania, we took the train to Broussa, where we stayed at the Hôtel d'Anatolie, then kept by a Frenchwoman, a Madame Broche. Here we found the two brothers Cambon—Paul, then French Ambassador at London, and Jules, the Ambassador at Berlin. Each had a party with him, and since the hotel was very small, the proprietress was rather flurried at the presence of so many distinguished guests. However, we got a dinner of sorts, and beds, but sleep was difficult, as it was Ramadan, and a great noise went on all night.

Soon after dawn we started on our travels. A stranger cavalcade can seldom have left Broussa. First, there were Charlie and I—he very short and broad, I very tall and thin—both wearing, as a protection against the sun, large sombrero hats, of a kind never seen before in Anatolia, to judge from the interest they evoked in the people whom we met. Then there was the *kavass*, of the Broussa branch of the Ottoman Bank. The local manager, who was the human image of a porpoise, insisted on the *kavass* accompanying us as a protection against brigands, despite our protestations that we already had an escort of gendarmes arranged for by the British Embassy, and that the presence of the *kavass*, betokening, as it must, that we were people of importance, would be an actual incitement to any brigands to seize and hold us to ransom. The porpoise was adamant, "The *kavass* a ver' braf man," he kept repeating. He

certainly presented a formidable appearance as he rode along the narrow streets of Broussa, between the plane and the amaranthus trees, that September morning. He was a big, hook-nosed and wild-looking Albanian, with a permanent scowl, and was dressed in a mixture of scarlet and blue cloth, with much gold lace, and a belt of silver lace, to which was attached a brightly hilted sword in a magnificent scabbard, as well as a silver pistol, with an ivory handle, and a huge knife. He had on his head one of the largest and reddest tarbouches which I have ever seen.

Then there were the two gendarmes, in blue serge uniform, with red lines and astrakhan caps. They were truculent and aggressive to any unfortunate peasant whom we met, shouting to him to get out of the way even when he was off the road, and we early formed the opinion that in a fight they would have been perfectly useless.

Then there was a morose, ragged, sick-looking man, who led the two horses carrying our stores and valises. Finally, there was Mr. Pellegrini. Mr. Pellegrini was one of the worst natural horsemen I have ever seen. All the horses which he rode went in zig-zag fashion, due, I think, to his habit of alternately pulling nervously the off- or near-side reins, to avoid toppling over. Once, on the outskirts of Pera, when he was taking us on a sight-seeing ride, he succeeded in colliding three times with passing vehicles in the course of half an hour. In one collision he tore the left leg of his trousers from top to bottom, on the pole of a bullock-cart.

Amid the jeers of the gamins of the place, who eluded all the efforts of the gendarmes and *kavass* to get at them, we left Broussa, and entered a most fertile plain, very intensively cultivated with maize, wheat, tobacco

and vines. The night before there had been rain, for the first time for three months, and there was a smell of sweetness and freshness in the air. The prospect in front of us was one of great beauty—lush valleys, rolling hills, and the Asiatic Olympus towering behind. Here, for the first time in their own land, I saw the Anatolian peasants, who are among the hardest workers and best soldiers in the world. They appeared to be a cheerful, prosperous and friendly lot. The contrast between their honest and open faces and those of the shifty and degenerate populace of Constantinople was astonishing. I can well understand why Mustapha Kemel moved his capital.

At night we reached the little town of Yenidje, where we found a surprisingly clean *keban*, and had an excellent meal of boiled chicken, beer, melon and Turkish delight. We left cards, at Mr. Pellegrini's suggestion, on the local *vali*, and the latter very politely returned our call.

The Governor was a mild, pleasant-mannered little man of slight build and scrupulously neat appearance. Our conversation, carried on through the agency of Mr. Pellegrini as interpreter, commenced with the exaggerated and inaccurate civilities customary in the East. The Pasha said that never had his humble town had such distinguished visitors; I said that never in America or Europe had I seen so attractive and progressive a place; the Pasha replied that he was honoured to think that a great statesman should pay him and Yenidje so singular a compliment, and he remarked (somewhat to my embarrassment in view of my attitude to them) that he had the deepest admiration for "Sir Asquith, and the so truly Liberal Government of England." After the Pasha, who I think at first had suspected that we were spies, or wanted a concession, had asked bluntly why we

had come to Yenidje, and Mr. Pellegrini had, in his own words, given the apparently satisfactory answer that we were "two young mens of noble family who travel as ze tourists," conversation became less formal, and more interesting. Our guest, who was an intelligent man, told us of agricultural progress and road-making in the neighbourhood, as well as of the doings of the local branch of the C.U.P. He said that there would be a meeting of the branch at a coffee-house that evening. There would be short speeches, and the singing of patriotic songs. Would we like to attend the gathering? I said that we would.

We went to the meeting. There were about two hundred members, and they appeared to be a stalwart, dignified and respectable body of men. The chairman received us in a most friendly manner, as did the audience, who all rose when we entered. Some of the speeches were delivered very slowly for our benefit, so that they might be translated easily by Mr. Pellegrini.

We left Yenidje at six o'clock the next morning, and rode until past twelve. Our path lay uphill most of the way, and we found ourselves at the mid-day halt in a down-like country, with a poor, thin soil, scanty herbage and few trees, but plenty of juniper-bushes. The universality of the various varieties of junipers is interesting. You find them on the South Downs, in France, Italy and Spain, in Palestine and in the Sinai and Arabian deserts. Herds of Angora sheep and goats and, occasionally, camels were to be seen grazing. It was a wild, desolate country, very different from that which we had traversed on the previous day.

Following a frugal lunch, I was lying on the hillside dozing, while the horses were being rested, when I was

suddenly woken by Mr. Pellegrini. "My lord, my lord," he said, "we must at once 'urry on. Ze brigands," he added breathlessly—"ze brigands are after us. A peasant say they reached ver ve was two hours ago, just after us. Ve must 'urry to Bilejik." Grumbling at being woken, Charlie and I got up, and we started off. The *kavass* scowled more than ever, and muttered imprecations to himself whilst he fingered the numerous weapons in his armoury. The gendarmes behaved, as we expected, in a perfectly futile manner, galloping alternately a hundred yards ahead and a hundred yards to the rear, with their carbines in their hands, shouting something at all the herds-boys we met, who, of course, promptly took to the hills in terror. Mr. Pellegrini, pale but determined, pursued his usual serpentine course.

"If ve can reach Bilejik before night, all is vell; but if zay catch us"—(pause and sigh)—"vell, ze soldiers vill 'ave to come to fight ze brigands."

I pointed out that that would not be much use after they had cut our throats.

"Ze Briteesh Government—I mean " (proudly) "our Government—vill intervene."

I remarked that, considering the number of times I had interrupted Members of it in the House of Commons, I thought it would gladly leave me to my fate at the hands of the brigands.

But Mr. Pellegrini, who did not understand the allusion, said with emotion, "Ve must 'ave courage, and be true Briteesh men."

Charlie and I were not greatly alarmed at all this palaver, and he begged me, if we were attacked, not to draw my revolver, as he was certain that if I did I should shoot not the brigands, but him, my horse or myself!

After a long, dusty and tiring ride, during which the gendarmes completely exhausted their unfortunate horses by their senseless manœuvres, we came in sight of Bilejik without mishap, and were soon riding through its narrow streets. Our arrival caused great interest, and soon we were being followed by a crowd. By the time we reached the *khan* for which we were bound, we were completely surrounded; it was difficult to get into the courtyard and some of the populace tried to follow us, whereupon the gendarmes and the *kavass*, with unnecessary violence, as I thought, and loud imprecations, rode at them. A boy was knocked down, but not hurt, at which there were murmurs of disapproval. His father came forward to protest, and the crowd surged towards the yard; whereupon the escort, after hitting wildly with their whips at all in reach, backed their horses into the yard, and ordered the landlord to shut the big wooden gate, which he was nothing loth to do. The crowd, after a good deal of shouting, finally dispersed and left us in peace.

Meanwhile, the manager of the Ottoman Bank had been summoned and arrived. "It is your hats," he said, "that interested the crowd; they see very few European hats here, and never any as big as yours."

The *khan* was very dirty, and the bank manager noticing that we had valises and provisions with us, advised us to camp out on the hillside above the town, where it was quiet and clean. I asked what about the brigands? The manager said that no brigands would dare to come so near the town and, although there were some in the hills, he very much doubted the story of their following us. He thought that it was a device on the part of the gendarmes to get *backsheesh*.

Accordingly, much to the disgust of the gendarmes and the *kavass*, who preferred the delights of the town, we bivouacked on the hillside. I had a valise with me on this trip of a new pattern designed in Germany. By day it held one's blankets and clothes; at night, unfolded, it could, with the aid of a miniature tent-pole, rope and pegs, be made into a tiny waterproof tent, just big enough into which to crawl. I slept in this little shelter tent that night on the hillside near Bilejik; the next time I used it was five years later, also on Turkish soil—in Gallipoli!

The morning after our arrival in Bilejik, I woke with severe pains in my inside, accompanied by violent sickness. There was a certain amount of cholera in Turkey that year, and I wondered if I had caught it. I could see, from the alarm on Charlie's face, that the same idea had occurred to him. We decided that the best thing I could do was to return to Constantinople as soon as possible. Fortunately, Bilejik is on the railway to Scutari, and a train left at 10.30 a.m. I was conveyed in a springless cart to the station, feeling all the time as if death would be a relief. The journey took seven hours, and it was grilling in the train, but fortunately for me I lay in a comatose state most of the time. It was an inexpressible relief to reach the Pera Palace Hotel, and cool, clean sheets at last. In a couple of days I was all right again, having had, I think, a bout of my African fever.

It was sad to have to abandon the trip, and sadder still to part from Mr. Pellegrini, who, of all the guides or factotums whom I have ever employed, was the best "comic." His final remarks were typical of him. Charlie told him that he could have the stores which we

had bought for the trip, of a week or ten days, we had contemplated making.

"Honourable Mr. Mills," he said earnestly, "memories of your kindness vill nevaire leave me. Ze food 'e vill benefit my many families."

"But I thought you were a Christian, Mr. Pellegrini," said Charlie. "Are you of the Mormon persuasion?"

"Mormon?" said Mr. Pellegrini, puzzled, and then, with a peal of laughter: "Ah, I zee. I mak' bad error. I mean many children—not families—Mormons—good joke—ver' good joke, Parliament joke."

After leaving Constantinople we went by boat to Constanza. The Euxine, for once living up to its euphemistic name, was very calm, and the trip across it by moonlight was delightful.

We stayed only a couple of days in Bucharest, and I must say that that rococo and "Merry Widowish" town did not attract me. Sinaia, the summer resort of the Roumanian Court and Society, we both liked immensely. Set among mountain scenery reminiscent of the Tyrol, it is charmingly laid out, and possesses good hotels and amenities. From there we went to stay with Prince and Princess Georges Bibesco at their delightful house Posada, which was afterwards burnt down. Marthe Bibesco had not then become famous as a writer, but had already produced a book, which had attracted attention, called *Alexandre Asiatique*. She is an admirable hostess, as well as one of the wittiest and most intelligent women in Europe.

We visited many peasant houses and a monastery, shot deer, and took long walks and drives, some of which were exciting; the roads round Posada are narrow and winding, with steep gradients. On them Princess



Bibesco drove, at great pace, a team of ponies, all of them very full of life. Georges Bibesco suggested that I should go flying with him, as being a lesser danger than riding behind the pony four-in-hand, but I declined, having, in those days, a horror of the air.

The anecdotes and *bons-mots* about Roumanian Society and life are innumerable, and often unsuitable for publication, although as often as not due to the Roumanians themselves, who are famed for their ready wit. Their neighbours often attribute to them the story of the man who lost his watch at a society function and complained of his loss to a high Court official, adding that he thought a distinguished general was standing near him about the time the watch disappeared. The Chamberlain disappeared for a moment, and on his return handed the watch back. The delighted owner asked how he had handled so delicate a matter with the gallant officer, and received the startling reply, "Hush ! he doesn't know that he hasn't still got it in his pocket."

After leaving Roumania we went to Budapest for a few days. To my mind, the view from Pest, looking across the Danube towards the Castle of Buda, perched on its rock, is one of the most satisfying in the world. It is worth sitting up all night, listening to gipsy music in the cafés and restaurants, in order to see this view at dawn.

From Budapest we went to Styria, and stayed with my friends, the Pálffy-Dauns, at Stübing. Here, in charming company, amid lovely surroundings and in glorious September weather, we spent a happy three days. Afterwards we went to Vienna, where I met many old friends, including Count Heinrich Apponyi, known to his intimates as "Mogy," who was at Oxford with me. He in-

sisted on our going to Apponyi<sup>1</sup> with him to try to get a mouflon. Apponyi, where they were introduced in the nineteenth century, is, so far as I know, the only place in Europe where you can get these animals, except in Corsica and Sardinia, where they are indigenous.

We reached the station for Apponyi about eleven-thirty one evening, and drove in a victoria to the house. All who knew "Mogy" in those days will not be surprised to learn that we proceeded, at full gallop, through the pitch darkness over dirt roads, full of pot-holes and runnels, the vehicle swinging from right to left, like a boat in a rough sea. After a few hours' sleep we set out before dawn, in order to be ready to shoot directly it was light. As I had sat up most of the night before in Vienna, as one always does there when one meets old friends, and had had only two or three hours' sleep that night, it was not surprising that I missed one of the biggest red-deer stags that I have ever seen. I never got a shot at a mouflon, and it was not to be until eighteen years later that I got my first mouflon at Apponyi. In the interval "Mogy" and I were on opposite sides in the War, and might easily have been shooting at each other, instead of at mouflon or stags at Apponyi, though, as a matter of fact, he was always on the Russian front and I, most of the time, on the Eastern.

I went home well pleased with my holiday, reflecting that I had had a far more interesting and amusing time than I should have had spending September, as did so many of my colleagues and contemporaries, at house-parties in Scotland, or at race-parties in the North of England. To meet the same people and talk about the same things as one has done all the summer doesn't

<sup>1</sup> Now called Oponice, and in Czecho-Slovakia.

amuse me. I am a patriotic Briton, but I do think that it is a good thing sometimes to get away from this charming but conventional island, and to leave the society of people who always live in it, however "thoroughly nice and English," or however "smart" they may be.

For a politician it is essential to see other countries. Not only should we not try to prevent people, at least in normal times, from going abroad for their holidays, but we ought to do all we can to attract foreign visitors to visit us.

## CHAPTER XII

Failure of the Constitutional Conference—Mr. A. J. Balfour's scathing speech—The second 1910 Election—Little change in Parties—Life then and now—Visits to the Riviera and Paris—A stag-hunt at Fontainebleau—Bicester, Grafton, Badminton and Pytchley Hunts—Mr. Henry Chaplin—The German Emperor and Empress—A gala performance—The German Crown Prince and Princess—A fancy-dress ball—Illness—The Coronation—Parliament Bill again—The Prime Minister's guarantee—Fury and clamour—The great surrender and its effects.

THE Constitutional Conference, having failed to reach a solution of the differences between the Parties, ended early in November; it was commonly reported at the time that Mr. Lloyd George, though not a member of the Conference, threw his influence into the scale against agreement; no doubt he had many scores, both of a public and personal character, to pay off against the House of Lords.

The breakdown of the Conference was debated in the House of Commons on November 18th, when the Prime Minister announced that there would be a Dissolution in a few days. In the discussion which followed, a high level of oratory was reached. Mr. Balfour was at his best, and made this scathing reference to the relationship between the Nationalists and the Government.

"He and his friends (*i.e.* Mr. Redmond and the Nationalists) were, no doubt with a high sense of duty, always in the political market, while the Gentlemen opposite (*i.e.* the Government) were always willing to

buy. It is almost certain that when a willing buyer and a willing seller come together something will happen. Still, I will not use the phrase buyer and seller, but will say people engaged in barter and mutual exchange. . . .”

A very wounding attack, because everyone knew the thesis to be true !

I escaped a contest in the December Election, and travelled about addressing audiences all over the country. In particular, I spoke at many meetings in and near Liverpool, and saw something of F. E. Smith’s wonderful gifts on the platform. I also helped Waldorf Astor<sup>1</sup> at Plymouth, where he won a notable victory. His wife, who took a prominent part in the contest, was not very different in electioneering skill, courage, vitality and irrepressibility from the Nancy Astor whom Parliament knows so well to-day.

When the House of Commons met in February 1911, at the beginning of what was to be, with perhaps one exception, the stormiest, most momentous, and longest Parliament in English history, there was little relative change in the position of Parties; the Government had lost a few seats as the result of the Election and was still dependent upon the Nationalist and Socialist vote. Nor was the constitutional issue the only difficulty with which the Government was faced. There was an epidemic of strikes and violence during the latter part of 1910 and in 1911. The suffragettes were as lawless and aggressive as ever; every prominent Cabinet Minister had to be closely guarded by detectives to save him from violent molestation by these women. A fierce coal strike broke out in South Wales towards the end of 1910; rioting and disturbance soon followed. The Government, mindful

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Viscount Astor.

of the sentimental radicalism which permeated so large a section of its following, did not wish to use troops. Instead, it sent a large detachment of the Metropolitan Police, as well as some from other districts; there was a dispute about the legality of using the London Police in this way. Mr. Churchill, the Home Secretary, was closely questioned on the matter in the House. On the whole, however, I think the course taken was a sensible one.

In January the celebrated Sidney Street "siege" took place, in which Guardsmen had eventually to shoot at the foreign criminals who had wounded or killed some of the police who went to arrest them. In the latter stage of the proceedings, Mr. Churchill took personal charge, and was criticised for so doing in some quarters. But it would have been almost contrary to nature for one of his temperament to avoid the thrill, danger and excitement which the situation involved.

Other, and even more serious, strikes occurred in the summer.

These events, like so many others in 1911 and the two succeeding years, belie the assertion, constantly made by novelists and other writers who were too young to remember those days, that life before the War went smoothly, uneventfully and safely for the nation. From 1909 onwards there was a succession of occurrences which gave some ground, as I have already mentioned, for the belief among foreign observers that Great Britain was rapidly losing her sanity and stability.

To those of us who are middle-aged and elderly, it is amusing, or irritating, constantly to be assured by these young writers that when we were young we did not have to face, as they have had to do, in their juvenescence, the frightful perplexities and confusions of the post-war

world. In other words, they propagate the wholly illusory idea that there was, in the decade from 1904 to 1914, an all-pervasive sense of security and peacefulness. As a matter of fact, we spent much of our youth sitting on a volcano, which constantly threw up flame and smoke, before the final eruption of August 1914.

I have made reference to a parallel assumption which is equally false. That is, that we who were then young had none of the restlessness, hustle and dispersal of effort which characterise the youth of to-day. Before I return to a recital of the grave national events of 1911, it may be useful to give a further rebuttal of this contention from my personal experience in the winter and spring of 1910-1911.

I have already said that I addressed a large number of meetings in the autumn of 1910; I was active, by speech and question, all through the early part of the 1911 Session. Often we had late sittings, sometimes lasting all night. Personally I did not only sit up late in the House of Commons: I went fairly often to the Continent, where I had many friends and acquaintances, as well as to large week-end parties in England. These visits were not conducive to "bed promptly at half-past ten." I have always sympathised with Lord Palmerston, who, when a gushing lady said to him, "It must be so dreadful for you to have to sit up night after night in the House of Commons, and so bad for your health," said, "Madam, I have been accustomed all my life to sit up somewhere, and if I did not sit up in the House of Commons, I should probably be sitting up in an even more disreputable place"!

My work was not confined to Parliament and the constituency, for, during 1911, I became Chairman of

the Committee of Management of the Hospital for Women, a position which I have held ever since, as well as a Member of the Court of Directors of the Royal Exchange Assurance. All this was in addition to the business, which I hope I conscientiously performed, of looking after the interests of two estates which I owned, and of another of which I was a tenant for life. Existence for me in those days was a constant hustle, but very amusing, and full of incident and interest. As an instance of rush and variety, I remember ten days in February. On a Saturday in that month I reached the Riviera to stay with my cousin, the Duchess of Marlborough, who had a large house-party in her villa. On the Monday I played polo at Cannes, and on Tuesday golf. On Wednesday I went to Monte Carlo, and on to Paris by the night train. There I stayed until Sunday, making a brief plunge into Parisian society of the Faubourg St. Germain. In addition to attending a sitting of the Chamber of Deputies, I lunched and dined out every night, finishing up on the Sunday at an enormous family luncheon with the old Duc and Duchesse de Rohan. I was almost the only person present who was not a relation of the host and hostess. Most of the company consisted of their sons, daughters, grandsons, grand-daughters, nephews and nieces, and they appeared innumerable. All the younger members of the party bowed or curtsied, according to their sex, to the Duc and Duchesse when they entered the immense salon. I felt I had stepped back into eighteenth-century France. In those years I knew personally a good many Frenchmen, such as the elder Guitry, Rodin, "Sem" and others, who were famous alike in London and Paris. But the Duc and Duchesse had a distinction of a different kind—the very personification of *race*.



On the Saturday I hunted with Monsieur Lebaudy's staghounds in the forest of Fontainebleau. Proceedings commenced with a large *déjeuner* at the Hôtel de France et d'Angleterre, at Fontainebleau, at which I was the only English guest of the Master, who was a French senator, and brother of the eccentric and notorious Jacques Lebaudy, self-styled "Emperor of the Sahara." He looked, in his scarlet coat, with weather-beaten, red face, and neat figure, just like the subject of an old picture. The environment of eighteenth-century decoration and prints which the hotel provided seemed admirably fitted for the members of a Hunt which boasts a history of four hundred years, and proudly claims that not even the Revolution prevented it from hunting.

The meet was some ten miles from the town. The tufters found a stag soon after 2 p.m. It was a dull, drizzling day, and there was a wonderful scent. I was lost in admiration at the capabilities of the pack. Having, from the point of view of British ideas, all sorts of faults in make and shape, the hounds possessed noses of undeniable merit. Once I saw them take the line of the hunted stag past another stag and two hinds. Though these were in full view of them, they never left the line on which they were.

The end came about 5 p.m. It was getting dusk; the rain had ceased, but a few drops were still pattering from the dark, tall, sombre beeches; in the west a faint red rim disclosed the sun which had been obscured all day. The fleeting white of the racing hounds, and the scarlet of the *piqueurs* showed up in the failing light. It was like a picture by Stubbs.

Running at last from scent to view, with a crash of music that reverberated through the big trees, the twenty-

five couples of great, deep-toned French hounds brought their stag to bay in the streets of Fontainebleau itself. We had had a nine-mile point, and many more as hounds ran.

I was asked if I would like to give the *coup de grâce*, but I thought it would be more merciful to the stag, and safer for me, to decline the offer. One of the *piqueurs* then killed him, almost instantaneously, with a short sword. The animal was afterwards skinned and, following a series of calls on the winding French horns—calls which were, I was told, at least six hundred years old—the whole carcass was given to the furiously baying and excited pack. I could not resist, though I knew that it would, as it did, scandalise the Master and “field,” giving a shrill English “Who-whoop.”

A young French boy, seventeen years of age, whom I knew, said to me in the course of the hunt, “Is it not wonderful? As for me, I have tried wine, women and song. But as one grows older one tires of these things. One is *blasé*. But hunting—I love hunting more and more each year.” I was both shocked and amused, but decided not to tell the story on my next political platform, since I thought this very French point of view would not help the *Entente Cordiale* in the eyes of a respectable British audience.

I returned to England on Sunday afternoon, after my lunch with the Rohans. On Monday I went down by train to Northamptonshire, hunted all day with the Grafton, returned to London, and went to a big dinner-party given by the Austrian Ambassador.

I defy any young man of to-day who, in Whyte-Melville’s words, has, “lived the life all round,” to cram much more into ten days than I did in that pre-war February.

During the season of 1910-11 I hunted a good deal with the Bicester and Grafton hounds, keeping my horses at Brackley, and being hospitably entertained by Mr. Ralph Lambton and Mr. Beaumont Pease, known to all his friends as "Monty," and now Chairman of Lloyd's Bank. They rented the Manor House in that town. Both Mr. Charles McNeill, the joint Master and huntsman of the Grafton, and Will Cox, huntsman of the Bicester, showed good sport. I also had several days with the Pytchley, when staying with the late Lord Annaly, the Master, at Holdenby. It is no disparagement of him in his later days, to say that Frank Freeman, the huntsman of the Pytchley, was then at the zenith of his powers. I have never seen a better man in handling hounds, or, indeed, in going to hounds in any of the grass countries. Mr. Henry Chaplin, M.P., "The Squire," then lived in the Pytchley country and, despite his age and weight, used to come out hunting, wearing, I remember, old-fashioned boots, which reached above his knees, of a kind I had never seen, except in Leech's pictures. He said to me one day, "I suppose I have had as much experience of the grass countries as anyone. I've known them for fifty years or more; save for when Lonsdale was Master of the Quorn and Tom Firr his huntsman, this is the finest *équipage*, as the French would say, that I have ever seen. Taking the whole thing together—the Master, Luke Annaly, a superb horseman, a very handsome man on a horse or off it, as bold as a lion, and with complete control of his 'field,' Freeman, the huntsman, a wonderful huntsman, and as picturesque-looking on a horse as an old sporting print—both splendidly mounted; a pack of hounds that can kill foxes as well as hunt them—not so common a combination in fashionable countries—well,

however long you live, you'll never see anything better."

"The Squire" once made a statement which I have always thought profoundly true. He said, "It is harder to find a really first-class huntsman than it is to find a good Prime Minister, and goodness knows that is hard enough." He might have added that, in the case of both offices, everyone thinks he has the right, as well as the technical knowledge, to criticise the manner in which the holder does his work; whereas the truth is, that not one man, or woman, in ten, who goes out hunting, has any real appreciation of a huntsman's difficulties, and not one man, or woman, in a hundred, of those who take an interest in politics, knows how immense and intricate are the responsibilities of a Prime Minister.

I also stayed a week in January 1911, at Badminton to hunt. The late Duke of Beaufort shared with his huntsman the task of hunting hounds, of which there were three packs. The Duke was then an elderly man, of great bulk and weight, and was excusably averse from jumping fences. But, owing to wonderful knowledge of his hunting country, and an uncanny instinct as to which way a fox would run, he was always there at critical moments, when his hounds wanted help. He was a most accomplished and scientific huntsman, and it was a pleasure to hunt with him, and hear, in the evening, his comments on the day's sport. The late Lord Ribblesdale was at Badminton at the time, laid up with a broken leg, as a result of a fall out hunting, at an age when most men would be thinking of taking to a bath-chair. Notwithstanding the pain and discomfort in which he was, he was a most amusing and delightful fellow-guest.

In May, the German Emperor and Empress, with the Crown Princess, came to London on a visit. There was a gala performance of *Money* at Drury Lane for them, with a splendid cast—Tree, Hare, Charles Wyndham, Cyril Maude, Bouchier, George Alexander, Violet Vanbrugh, Alexander Carlisle, and many other stars, even in the minor parts. The audience was described in the Press of the time as being one of the most brilliantly fashionable ever assembled in London. Personally, I thought it rather mixed, though none the worse for that. I noticed, sitting near me, the head of a catering firm, and Luigi, then head-waiter at Romano's.

Next day I met the Emperor and Empress at dinner at Lansdowne House. I was presented to the Emperor after dinner, and he began at once to question me about the House of Commons, and on political conditions in general. I noticed that he looked intently at all the men brought up to talk to him, and never took his eyes off their faces. I returned his stare with interest, having no reason to be afraid of him. I gave him no information of any value about the probable course of political events, as, even in those far-off days, I regarded him instinctively as an enemy of this country. But I must add that, on this occasion, as was so frequently the case, he was charm, graciousness and good-humour personified. The Empress impressed me with a sense of goodness and dignity.

Later on, in the same summer, at the time of the Coronation, I met the German Crown Prince and Princess at lunch at Montagu House, the London house of my uncle, the late Duke of Buccleuch. Montagu House, in those days, was often the scene of entertainments in the old *Grand Seigneur* manner. To-day, as the

home of the Ministry of Labour, it is devoted to a very different purpose.

I liked the Crown Prince and Princess, though I thought he had the wildest and most roving eyes I had ever seen. After lunch he talked politely in turn to a number of distinguished, but elderly ladies, who belonged to a period when for a woman to try to look beautiful by artificial means after forty was to do something definitely immoral.

I noticed, during these conversations, that he was looking the whole time, not at the *grandes dames*, but at some one very much younger, and deliciously pretty, who was in the room.

In May "F. E." and I gave a fancy-dress ball at Claridge's Hotel. Our guests included Royalty, Ambassadors, actors, politicians, as well as many young married couples and girls and young men. The Speaker came dressed as an Arab, and both the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition were there. I think we could justly claim that the whole thing was a success, since dancing did not end until nearly five in the morning.

Two days later a letter appeared in large print on the leader page of *The Times* under the heading "A Protest," and over the signature of "A Peer." The writer strongly condemned the presence of the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition at such a gathering at a time when the country was faced with a constitutional crisis as grave as any in its history. He suggested that it showed levity and bad taste. He spoke of "smart ladies dressed as ballet-girls," by which he obviously referred to two of our guests who were charmingly and perfectly properly disguised as ballerinas. "F. E." and

I felt the letter to be unfair and unjust. The party was a private one, and, at that time at any rate, the historic custom of British political life, which permitted, and indeed encouraged, social intercourse between political opponents, was still recognised. To my mind, it is a good custom, and one that accords with the British character and outlook. A couple of years later, at the height of the Ulster controversy, this custom fell into abeyance to some extent.

We did our best to discover the author of the letter, but without success. All sorts of rumours were abroad as to the writer. Some said it was Lord Rosebery. Others positively asserted that it was Lord Northcliffe, who was then the owner of *The Times*. But since he was at the ball, I do not believe that he would have written such a letter. The mystery was never solved, despite all our efforts.

At the end of May 1911 I had to undergo a slight operation. It was followed by complications, and it was not until the autumn that I was sufficiently well to do any work. I spent two months at Sandwich, in a house belonging to my friends, Waldorf and Nancy Astor. But for their great and characteristic kindness in lending me a charming house, right on the seashore, which combined every comfort with wonderful views and glorious air, I do not know how I should have got through that trying time. It was one of the hottest and driest summers on record, with shade temperatures frequently in the eighties and sometimes in the nineties. Most of the time I was on my back, in considerable discomfort and some pain, fretting moreover at my inactivity and my absence from Parliament at an exciting period. I managed to get to London in June, and hobble on sticks to see the

Coronation, but the effect on my health was unfortunate, so I had to return to Sandwich. Still, it was worth risking something to witness so memorable a scene.

I had also been present at King Edward's Coronation, but, in some respects, that of our present King was the more impressive. King Edward was already an old man when he ascended the Throne. The sight of King George, in the prime of life, with his gracious consort by his side, and his charming, fair-haired children near him, formed a picture that was at once regal, domestic, dignified and intimate. The Prince of Wales, handsome, slim, straight, and looking very youthful in his robes, attracted everyone's attention.

There was, in the Abbey, and outside among the crowd, a kind of mental atmosphere which it is difficult to analyse. Predominant was intense sympathy for a sovereign who, thus early in his reign, was to be called upon to act in a situation which had in it the elements of civil war. There was also a feeling of foreboding among thoughtful people. At home things seemed to be going from bad to worse; abroad there was no relaxation of Germany's efforts to outbuild our Navy, and no result from various informal *pourparlers* held to reach agreement in this matter. The more pessimistic said that never again would there be a coronation in this country. The most usual comment was, "I do feel so sorry for the King; everyone likes what they know of him, but he cannot yet have the experience or authority of King Edward. He is coming to the throne when everything is more disturbed than it has been for years, and when political controversy is concerned with the prerogative of the Crown." They would then go on to blame the House of Lords, if they were Liberals, and the



Government, if they were Conservatives, for dragging the Throne into the Parliamentary arena.

Apart from the Coronation, which went off without a hitch, with the brilliance and smooth efficiency of all ceremonies in this country in modern times, it was a year of gloom, which not even the glorious weather of the summer could efface.

The Parliament Bill returned to the Commons in July, with various amendments, including a proposal to set up a Joint Committee of both Houses, to decide whether a Bill was, or was not, a money Bill, and which Bills, in the event of disagreement, several times repeated, between the two Houses, should be put to the country by means of a referendum before becoming law. This last proposal is usually known as the Lansdowne amendment.

Undoubtedly the Government should have accepted the principle of the joint Committee, which was a perfectly equitable one. The Lansdowne amendment was a more questionable proposal.

On July 5th the business down for discussion in the House of Commons was the Lords' Amendments to the Parliament Bill. By that date it had become pretty well known that, before the December General Election in the previous year, Mr. Asquith had sought assurances from the King that, in the event of the result of that Election being in favour of the Government, he would use his royal prerogative to create Peers, in order to carry the Parliament Bill in the Lords.

The actual words of the advice tendered to His Majesty, and accepted by him were :

“ His Majesty's Ministers cannot take the responsibility of advising a dissolution unless they may

understand that, in the event of the policy of the Government being approved by an adequate majority in the new House of Commons, His Majesty will be ready to exercise his constitutional power, which may involve the prerogative of creating Peers if needed to secure that effect shall be given to the decision of the country. His Majesty's Ministers are fully alive to the importance of keeping the name of the King out of the sphere of party and electoral controversy. They take upon themselves, as is their duty, the entire and exclusive responsibility for the policy which they will place before the electorate. His Majesty will doubtless agree it would be inadvisable, in the interests of the State, that any communication of the intentions of the Crown should be made public unless and until the actual occasion should arise."

Furious indignation was caused in the Unionist Party by this action of the Prime Minister, which was held to be calculated, at best, to place the King in a cruel dilemma, and at worst to be unconstitutional, since it was intended to bind the Crown to take certain steps before it was known what would be the decision of the electorate.

When Mr. Asquith rose to speak on July 5th he was greeted with shouts and yells; there followed a period of sustained disorder, which eventually caused the Speaker to bring the sitting to an end. The "Hansard" report makes interesting reading. One of the interruptions contains a word having a slang meaning which no newspaper would print. It was alleged that Mr. Lloyd George had used it about his opponents in a platform speech.

On August 7th Mr. Balfour moved a vote of censure, in the following terms :

“That the advice given to His Majesty by His Majesty’s Ministers, whereby they obtained from His Majesty a pledge that a sufficient number of Peers would be created to pass the Parliament Bill in the shape in which it left this House, is a gross violation of constitutional liberty, whereby, among many other evil consequences, the people will be precluded from again pronouncing upon the policy of Home Rule.”

Furious speeches were made on both sides. The motion was defeated by 119 votes, after a speech by “F. E.,” delivered amidst constant interruption, which poured vitriolic ridicule and scorn on the persons who were alleged to have expressed privately to the Chief Whip their willingness to receive peerages.

On the next day the Lords’ Amendments were considered, and eventually rejected in the main. Lord Hugh Cecil said that the Prime Minister had been guilty of High Treason. Very angry speeches again came from both sides of the House.

A few days later occurred the great surrender. To the astonishment of most people, and to the great indignation of many members of the Unionist Party (including some of the youngest and most energetic), in both Houses, Lord Lansdowne, Lord Curzon, and other Unionist leaders in the Lords, gave way when the Bill returned to their House. Lord Halsbury and a number of peers, henceforth to be known as the “Diehards,” voted to retain the amendments, so that the Unionist Party was split. The amendments were, of course, lost.

I have not the space to enlarge upon the results of the action taken by the Unionist leaders in both Houses. The immediate effect was to arouse such overwhelming indignation against Arthur Balfour in influential and important sections of the Party that it brought to a head the dissatisfaction against his leadership which had existed since 1906, and, indeed, before it. The result was to be seen in his resignation in the autumn, decently camouflaged (as in all such cases) on the grounds of ill-health and of age. The ultimate effect was to destroy two-chamber Government in this country, because the Lords ceased to have any control over Finance—the one matter of supreme importance in every modern state. It is no answer to say that before the Parliament Act the power of the Lords over Finance Bills was limited—the point is that it was there.

Another effect was undoubtedly greatly to shake the self-confidence of the Upper House in itself. The Lords were like an army whose leader has told it that it must hold its ground at all costs, even to the point of annihilation, and then suddenly says, "I have changed my mind; we must retreat, whatever the cost." Students of military history know that such an army takes months, and even years, to recover its morale. The Peers, though they have done useful work since 1911, have never recovered their morale.

It has often been asked, What was the real motive behind the complete *volte-face* of Lords Lansdowne, Curzon and others? I think that, undoubtedly, it was a desire to save the Crown from the great embarrassment of having to make peers on the scale necessary to pass the Bill.

The question as to whether they were justified in their

course of action is a difficult and delicate one to decide. Clearly they felt a divided loyalty. On the one hand, they wanted to protect the Sovereign from having to take the serious step of creating the peers, and, on the other hand, they wanted to prevent that partial destruction of the Constitution which the Parliament Act entailed.

Personally, I think that they were completely wrong, both in their diagnosis of the situation, and in their decision. Had a hundred or two hundred new peerages suddenly been created, indignation in many quarters, and ridicule and contumely in others, would have been directed, not against the King, but against the Government. Moreover, it is a reasonable assumption that such a step would have rendered inevitable a real reform of the House of Lords at an early date. Surrender, on the other hand, only served to perpetuate its existing composition, with all its obvious disadvantages. It was too late, in any event, to keep the Throne out of the controversy. It had been effectively dragged in by the Prime Minister's advice in the previous November.

Lord Birkenhead, who was not only the best fighter on our side in the controversy, but also the coolest and most sagacious of the Unionist leaders in counsel, always said that it was against his private advice that the Lords had rejected the Budget, but that, having rejected it, it was the height of political pusillanimity to give way on the Parliament Bill.

"F. E." never received sufficient public credit for the soundness, clarity, moderation and common sense of the views which, throughout his political life, he pressed, behind the scenes, upon the various leaders of the Unionist Party under whom he served.

No greater injustice could be done to Lord Birkenhead's memory than to represent him in those days, or, indeed, at any time during his career, as a mere brilliant swash-buckler. He had always vision to plan a long way ahead.

## CHAPTER XIII

Strikes—Agadir—Why the railway strike ended—International relations—Vittel—A French cavalry division on manœuvres—Hackwood—Lord Curzon of Kedleston—A digression—The “Confederates” and the “Allies”—The Halsbury Club—Mr. Balfour’s resignation—Mr. Leo Maxse—The question of the leadership—Mr. Bonar Law—The *Evening Times*—Mr. Edgar Wallace.

AUGUST 1911 was a month of suffocating heat in England and Western Europe generally. Possibly this was partly responsible for the fury and clamour at home, and for a crisis abroad which nearly brought the Great War three years in advance of its occurrence. Men’s minds were everywhere a reflection of the heavy, sulphurous and oppressive atmosphere.

This European crisis flared up owing to the stubborn determination of the German Government to send a cruiser to a port in Morocco in order ostensibly to protect economic interests which could scarcely be said to be in jeopardy. That, in a nutshell, is the history of the *Panther* and Agadir. Eventually, after breathing threatenings and slaughterings, the German Government climbed down, as a result of united pressure by Great Britain and France. For some days Europe was at a finger’s breadth from war. When the great clash came three years later on, many realised that “Agadir” had made war inevitable.

So aggressive was the attitude of the Germans that even Mr. Lloyd George felt constrained to make a monitory

speech, thus causing fluttering in the Liberal Nonconformist dovecotes. From "Agadir" on, relations between Great Britain and Germany became definitely more difficult.

Early in August, while Parliament was engaged in furious controversy over the question of the Lords, there was a serious strike, involving 70,000 men, at the London docks. Hardly had this been settled when a railway strike broke out over the question of the recognition of the National Union of Railwaymen. England had never before known an attempt at a general railway strike, and everyone was apprehensive when troops were hurried to important viaducts, bridges and termini. During the week-end of August 11th, the Railway Companies agreed to a Commission of Inquiry, and the strike ended. I do not think that the real reason for the action which the representatives of the Companies took has ever been stated in public. What principally influenced them, was a communication from the Government of a most secret and confidential nature to the effect that there was now risk of a Franco-German war over Agadir, and that Mr. Asquith had received a private letter from Monsieur Caillaux, the French Prime Minister, stating that his Government believed that a German Army Corps might be over the frontier at any moment.

Readers who are too young to remember those days may ask: How did all this affect us? We had no defensive or offensive alliance with France—only an "*Entente Cordiale*."

The answer is that, in certain circumstances, we should have been compelled to send the Expeditionary Force to the Continent to afford support to France. What actually occurred in 1914 might have happened at any



time from 1908 onwards. Before 1908, or thereabouts, our Expeditionary Force was not ready.

Lord Grey's book and his speeches make it clear that we had no secret agreement with France, though there had been informal discussions between the high military authorities in both countries as to the co-operation which might be necessary.

The efforts of German writers to prove that there was a secret agreement have failed. Moreover, Bülow and others, who were not lacking in historical knowledge, must have realised that Great Britain could not afford to remain neutral if the Low Countries were invaded. Our own safety would demand action. We could not allow, and have never been able to admit, that the whole of the Channel ports should be held by the strongest military Power in Europe.

If any had a grievance against the Liberal Governments which were in power from 1906 to 1914 they were those of their members—such as the late Lord Morley—who were not put in full possession of the facts. Indeed, for a long time these Ministers knew no more than the House of Commons, or the British public as a whole.

At the time of the first Moroccan crisis in 1906, Lord Grey informed both the German and the French Ambassadors that, in his view, public opinion in England would rally to the material support of France if war were at that time forced upon her on the Moroccan question. The French Government thereupon suggested that "conversations" should take place between British and French naval and military experts in order that any eventual support we might feel obliged to afford France should be rendered more effective. Lord Grey, with the acquiescence of the then Prime Minister (Sir Henry

Campbell-Bannerman), and the late Lords Haldane and Oxford (then respectively Secretary of State for War and Chancellor of the Exchequer), agreed to this course.

Lord Grey, in his speech in the House of Commons on August 3rd, 1914, justified his non-submission of this most important matter to the Cabinet as a whole, on the grounds that "an answer had to be given," but did not say why it had to be given so urgently.

According to Lord Grey, the fact that these "conversations" were taking place was not revealed to the Cabinet until "much later on"; this is excused on the grounds that "the crisis had passed," and the thing had "ceased to be of importance"—but the "conversations" continued, and were interpreted, at least in French Government circles, as a preliminary to eventual naval and military co-operation between France and Great Britain.

At the time of the Agadir crisis, Lord Grey seems to have repeated his former tactics, and it is probable that the grave question of the "conversations" was not brought before the Cabinet until November 1912, or some six years after they were first authorised. Then, and then only, was an unofficial letter written by Sir Edward Grey to Monsieur Paul Cambon, intended to assert the entire freedom of action of both France and Great Britain, but the third and substantive paragraph of this letter is so nebulous in phrasing as to be almost meaningless.

Lord Grey, or the Prime Minister, or the First Lord of the Admiralty, or the Secretary of State for War, could have issued a Memorandum informing "His Majesty's servants" that in certain circumstances we should be bound to come to the aid of France. The House of

Commons could have been told the facts also, emphasis being laid on the point, which is not in dispute, that we had no commitments to France, that we should be the sole judges of whether, or not, we took action in any given situation, and that this statement of policy connoted no hostility to Germany. Any Foreign Office official could have drafted a few admirable sentences to accompany the statement, in order to make clear what has always been the historic rôle of England in the case of aggressive action by any Power against the Low Countries.

Some of the younger members of our Party in the House, who knew the facts, tried to have them brought out in debate. We got little encouragement from our Leaders, and the atmosphere of the House of Commons was unfavourable to our attempts. I have always thought that the Liberal Leaders from 1906 to 1914 have escaped very lightly in this matter. The obliteration of ordinary party conflict during the War, as well as the tolerance of British public opinion, combined to prevent them receiving the censure which they deserved for their cowardice.

They failed in their duty of acquainting the public with the possibilities of the situation mainly because they were frightened of their own Back Benchers in the 1906 Parliament, and of their Irish Nationalist allies after the 1910 Election. They thought that both alike would "blow up" if told that we might have to fight a European war.

Certainly the effusive welcome given by Liberal Back Benchers to Trebitsch Lincoln,<sup>1</sup> when he joined their ranks in 1910, lent some colour to the view that no good Liberal could be too anti-Imperial in his

<sup>1</sup> He was a Hungarian Jew by birth, and a spy by profession.

sympathies, and that consequently a bold statement of the Government's intention to protect the safety of this land would meet with furious indignation from its supporters. I think, however, that it did its supporters an injustice; the courage and self-sacrifice of so many Liberal and Nationalist Members of Parliament during the War proved that the Parties of the left in these islands respond to a patriotic appeal when it is properly made.

During the railway strike I went abroad to Vittel to complete my convalescence. It was hotter than ever, and Northern France looked as brown, and smelt as dusty and burnt-up, as Africa. The air was vibrant with rumours and menaces, for the Agadir crisis was in full swing. Later in the month I had an interesting experience. The first Cavalry Division of the Northern French Army came to Vittel for its annual manœuvres. I got to know its Commander, and my aunt, Albertha, Lady Blandford, and I obtained a pass from him to follow the troops and watch the proceedings.

We left Vittel one morning at four-thirty. It was a glorious day, with a hint of autumn, and the rolling downs, all golden with newly-made stubble, free of hedge or wire, presented an ideal theatre for cavalry exercises from the point of view alike of troops and spectators. The Division, six regiments, three of Cuirassiers, three of Hussars, with two brigades of Artillery, were attacking a flag enemy.

At one point the whole Division, less its advance, rear and flank protection, galloped in column of squadrons across a great, gently sloping valley in front to us. I had seen a British Cavalry Brigade on manœuvres do the same thing, but they were, of course, much less numerous,

and they all wore khaki. Here, indeed, on this August morning was the glitter and panoply of war; the light and dark blue of the uniforms, clink of swords, rattle of limbers, flash of sunlight on buttons, sheen on horses' coats, stalwart, dusty troopers, their faces brick-red from the sun, *débonair*, lithe, beautifully mounted officers—it all combined to make me want to sing the *Marseillaise*. The day was the forty-first anniversary of the eve of Sedan; I felt, looking at what an English soldier would call the "whole show," that morning, that it was sound and good; that here was the real France, not the false and meretricious one of Montmartre or the Côte d'Azur, and that when the crash came between Germany and France, there would not be a second Montmedy—for France.

Parliament resumed its sittings at the end of October. Arthur Balfour got quite a good reception from his supporters, and made a fighting speech which somewhat restored his position, but it was quite obvious that feeling was very bitter against both him and Lord Lansdowne in some quarters of our Party, and also that the old divisions were reopening.

Our position was exemplified by a remark made to me at a party given by the late Lord Curzon of Kedleston at Hackwood, the week-end after Parliament met. The guests were the late Lords Lansdowne, Cromer, Roberts, Manners, and Chaplin, Lord Dunmore, V.C., Sir Austen Chamberlain, Lady Edwina Roberts, Lady Edward Cecil,<sup>1</sup> and the late Lady Roberts. We were almost equally divided in our views on the burning question of the day—whether or not the Peers should have surrendered. Although the subject was never mentioned,

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Viscountess Milner.

someone truly said to me, "We seem to be not one, but two parties here this week-end."

Incidentally, there were at that small gathering an ex-Foreign Minister and Viceroy of India in Lord Lansdowne, another ex-Viceroy (and future Foreign Minister) in the shape of our host, an ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer (and future Foreign Minister) in Sir Austen Chamberlain, an ex-Commander-in Chief in India and at home and a V.C. in Lord Roberts, an ex-Cabinet Minister in Lord Chaplin, a V.C. in Lord Dunmore, and a former winner of the "National" in Lord Manners, and, perhaps the most remarkable of them all in achievement, Lord Cromer. I was the only other male guest; never before, or since, have I felt so embarrassingly undistinguished.

This was the first of several delightful visits which I paid to Hackwood. Many attempts have been made to explain and to interpret Lord Curzon's complicated character, compounded as it was of many contradictory ingredients. But, like his life-long friend, Lord Balfour, his personality defies analysis. As a host he was charming, witty and considerate. Of the men with whom he came into contact in politics, few got to know him well, and consequently many disliked what they regarded as his pomposity. But those, like myself, who, though separated by nearly a generation from him, were honoured by his friendship, were very grateful for that friendship; help, advice, humour and understanding were the essence of it. Of one thing about him I am fully convinced: he was one of the greatest, if not the greatest, Viceroy who has ever served the Crown in India. My conviction is based not on mere hearsay, but on information gained from a long term at the India Office. Lord

Curzon suffered fools not only ungladly, but very ungladly. There are some fools, both among Europeans and Indians, whom a Viceroy meets in the course of his official or social duties. Some of them who were in India in Lord Curzon's time are still living. Even to-day they tell, with gusto, of a tactless act or wounding phrase of his; invariably they add, "And that was the sort of man he was." It is a dastardly half-truth. Certainly, like many another man of genius, he often gave great offence in the way which I have described; though often, too, the victims thoroughly needed a lesson. There are certain Englishmen and Englishwomen (whom some Indians have, unfortunately, copied) who think that they can go through life without rebuke, boring everyone by the inanity and banality of their conversation and the vacuity of their minds on every subject of any interest or importance. If some man of exceptional intellectual distinction, such as Lord Curzon or the late Lord Birkenhead, at a casual meeting, has failed to show the politeness to them which they consider their due, they never forget the slight. In so doing, they merely emphasise the shallowness of their own intellect and the hollowness of their judgment.

Lord Curzon's achievement in India has stood the test of time, and is a monument to a great patriot.

After this digression I must return to my chronicle of events in the autumn Session of 1911. But before relating the circumstances of Mr. Balfour's resignation, I must try to describe the history and nature of two organisations within the Conservative Party. Though to neither of them can be ascribed with fairness the primary cause of the resignation, both of them had a considerable share in bringing it about.

The first of these organisations had been in existence for some years before 1911. It was known as the "Confederacy," and its Executive Committee as the "Allies." Its rules and list of members were never published, and, though it has long ceased to exist, I am not going to break faith by disclosing them now. We "Confederates" were, however, a "ginger" organisation of Peers, Members of the House of Commons, business men, lawyers and journalists. Many influential men were of our number. We did not, as a body, declare ourselves hostile to Mr. Balfour and the official organisation, but we were distinctly unsympathetic to both. Our trend was protectionist and "Diehard."

The Liberal Press made some capital out of our existence, which we sought neither to advertise nor explain. At first, the powers that be in the Unionist Party laughed at us, as a sort of silly secret society; gradually, however, they showed resentment and alarm. Their minions, in the shape of the Lobby correspondents of the Party journals, began to attack us. To within a few weeks of Mr. Balfour's resignation, paragraphs like this began to appear: "Mr. Balfour is accepted and honoured as the only possible Leader of the Unionist Party; ninety-five per cent. of the Party realise how fortunate they are in having the greatest statesmen of our time at their head; as for the other five per cent., the foolish young hotheads of the ridiculous 'Confederates,' I understand that the Chief Whip is contemplating severe action against them," etc., etc.

The other organisation to which I refer was the Halsbury Club. This was composed of Peers and



Members of Parliament who objected to the surrender of the House of Lords. There was nothing secret about its constitution or its proceedings. Its *raison d'être* was to promote principles the exact opposite of those which had inspired the decision of the Lords' majority in the last stage of the fight on the Parliament Bill. It was called after the veteran ex-Lord Chancellor, who had been the Leader of the Opposition in that fight. There was in its constitution no hostility, open or implied, to the Leaders of the Party, and it did not, like the "Confederacy," take action at bye-elections, to try to secure Unionist candidates of its own trend of thought. Nevertheless, its birth, in the late summer of 1911, could fairly be regarded by Mr. Balfour as an addition to the burdens of his leadership, and by others as yet a further example of the fissiparous character of the Unionist Party under that leadership.

No doubt in order to assist in removing these impressions, the chairman, Lord Halsbury, Austen Chamberlain and other Front Benchers, at the first annual meeting of the Club, on the 6th of November, decided to move a resolution of confidence in Mr. Balfour and Lord Lansdowne. This action seemed, to the younger members of the Club, preposterous in the highest degree; though our organisation was not formed to oppose either Leader, its whole reason for existence was a definite hostility to certain specific acts of that leadership. We thought that to acclaim the Leaders by such a resolution would make us all look very disingenuous, or very ridiculous.

A number of us decided to act together. As most of my colleagues in this action are still alive, and some are very prominent in politics to-day, I will not divulge

their names. It is sufficient to say that we were vigorous in our denunciation of the proposed resolution, and several of the "Front Benchers" were equally vigorous in the opposite direction. In fact, they threatened to leave the Club if our view, which was embodied in our proposed amendment, was adopted. When I had spoken, "F. E.," who was present, handed me a bit of paper, with the words on it, "If you knew what I know, you would not go on with your amendment." When I asked him what he meant, he said that Balfour would resign in three or four days, and if our amendment was passed, everyone would say that we had driven him out. "F. E." added that on no account must I divulge the information to anyone. I was in an agony of indecision as I had seconded the amendment, and felt that if I now made a *volte-face* I should let down my friends and look ridiculous myself. Eventually I decided to follow "F. E.'s" advice. I carried it out by adopting, in a second speech, an attitude of humble submission to the superior wisdom of the Front Benchers present, which, in fact, I have never felt then or since; I induced the proposer to believe that we had both been wrong. We had some difficulty with our supporters, but at last they also acquiesced in our surrender. The Front Benchers beamed on us with the pleased air of those who have convinced and corrected a lot of silly schoolboys.

Mr. Balfour duly resigned three days later. His supporters, who included almost all that portion of London Society which was Unionist in its views, were very angry with those of us whom they regarded as responsible for his resignation. A relative of mine, occupying a very prominent social position, said to me

with tears, I think partly of rage, in her eyes, on the day that the announcement was made, "Well, I hope you and your friends are pleased with your work; all your plotting and treachery has succeeded at last; you've driven out the best Leader the Party has ever had."

Arthur Balfour possessed one of the greatest and most acute intellects ever devoted to politics in this country. In office, before and after he was Leader of the Unionist Party, he performed many acts of high statesmanship and great courage. Nevertheless, he definitely failed as a Party Leader; in some respects he was the worst Party Leader for fifty years. His apologists are entitled to say, as they do, that Mr. Joseph Chamberlain and we Tariff Reformers made things difficult for him; but that was not the sole, or main cause of his failure. This was due to lack of certain qualities, which I have described earlier in this book. Among all the more vigorous elements of the Unionist Party there was great relief when he ceased to be Leader, though mingled with it were respect and affection for the man himself, and gratitude for the honourable manner in which he accepted the fact that it was better for the Party that he should resign.

Despite what is invariably said at times of crisis in leadership by all the Party "bonnets," as the Parliamentary sycophants are described in our House of Commons slang, there is nothing meritorious in a Leader refusing to resign when the majority of his followers no longer want him, nor is there anything dishonourable in their trying to rid the Party of a man who has lost their confidence.

Too many people assume that once a man has been selected to lead a Party, he should be allowed to retain

his office for the rest of his life, irrespective of whether he is a success or a failure. In fact, they treat the position as if it were an hereditary monarchy, or, at least, a long-term presidency; it is neither. A Party Leader, it is true, has often to do things of which his followers do not wholly approve; if they trust him, they will grumble, but eventually acquiesce. But directly that Leader loses their confidence, the sooner he goes, the better.

The late Mr. Leo Maxse, editor of the *National Review*, coined a slogan—"B. M. G." (Balfour must go)—some weeks before the resignation. For so doing he was bitterly criticised by the Balfourites, and referred to as if he were a kind of jackal, unfit for the society of decent men and women. This idea of the sacrosanctity of a political Leader is absurd, and Mr. Maxse, neither for the first nor last time in his stormy public life, did good work in combating it.

Following the resignation, the Tapers and Tadpoles were, of course, busy suggesting a successor; most of us "Diehards" wanted Austen Chamberlain; the other section of the Party wanted Walter Long. After some feverish days of position manœuvring on the part of their supporters, but not of the men themselves, for each of them behaved with the utmost dignity and unselfishness, a *tertium gaudens* was chosen in the shape of Mr. Bonar Law. Mr. Lloyd George is reported to have said at the time, "The fools have stumbled on their best man by accident."

Our new Leader lacked the intellectual distinction of our old one; but he could wield a bludgeon in debate as effectively as "A. J. B." used a rapier; moreover, that bludgeon was studded with the nails of indisputable statistical fact culled from an unchallengeable memory.

"Bonar" seldom, if ever, used notes. But he hardly ever made a mistake in a date, a figure, or a name. "A. J. B.," on the contrary, invariably floundered and stumbled when he had to use an argument involving an intricate or arithmetical calculation. "A. J. B." was supreme in destructive satire; "Bonar" was unrivalled in cold, clear, unembellished analysis. In his way he could hit as hard as his predecessor.

In most respects the two men were the antithesis of each other, though this did not prevent genuine friendship between them. "A. J. B." was the Cavalier; "Bonar" was the Roundhead.

"Bonar" was very shy, and, at first, like his predecessor, a little too inaccessible to the rank and file. But directly one got to know him, one was charmed by the kindliness and simplicity of his character, as well as by the shrewdness and accuracy of his judgment. He was a popular Leader of our Party. What Mr. Baldwin said of him in the House of Commons at his death could be said of many of us who knew him: "I loved the man."

The change of leadership was effected with far less trouble than was anticipated, and the Party soon settled down again. Not much more happened in politics that autumn but everyone knew that in 1912 the great Home Rule fight would be again upon us.

In 1911 there was born a paper called the *Evening Times*. It was promoted by a number of wealthy city men, really in order to fight the growing trusts of the London Press. I was one of its directors.

The paper died the next year because of a sequence of events connected with a single individual who was one of its largest financial backers. There was a number

of good men on its staff, and, as usual, there were some pathetic cases of individual disappointment, and even disaster, when the paper disappeared.

To one man, however, a very cheery, delightful fellow, who was our racing editor, the crash meant a new start, which was to lead him to a very lucrative career; his name was Edgar Wallace.

## CHAPTER XIV

A voyage to South Africa—Social life on British liners—Madeira—The Tropics—Capetown—Johannesburg—Sir Abe Bailey—Bulawayo—Livingstone—Christmas Day on the train—The Karoo—Grootfontein—Mr. Vansaal—The vanished herds—British and Dutch—Home again—Opening of the 1912 Session—The new Leader—His mistakes at the outset—The Coal Strike and the Coal Bill—Beginning of the Home Rule fight—The Prix de Larochefoucauld—Hardelot—An "Elizabethan" tourney—Lord Kitchener of Khartoum—A business trip to Canada—The reciprocity issue—Mr. Borden and Sir Wilfrid Laurier—The Calgary Stampede—H.R.H. The Duke of Connaught—A Western Speech—Virginia—Mr. Langhorne—S.S. *Olympic*.

At the end of November 1911 I went for a trip to South Africa to complete my recovery from illness, and arranged to sail on a ship with a friend of mine, "Fox" McDonnell,<sup>1</sup> a most witty and amusing companion.

This voyage of seventeen days is almost invariably calm, save for the short run from Southampton to Madeira, and for forty-eight hours before one reaches Capetown, when bad weather may be encountered. Indeed, it would be most restful if it were not for the social activities which are inseparable from life on a British liner. Deck games, deck sports, fancy-dress dances, ordinary dances, children's sports, bridge tournaments, book teas and race meetings succeed each other with never a pause. All this is satisfactory enough for the ship's barber who supplies the prizes, the ship's staff who get the tips, and for those of the passengers who are young and

<sup>1</sup> The Honble. Alexander McDonnell.

energetic, or who like belonging to Committees and "getting things up." These activities also help to pass the time for that not inconsiderable portion of the human race on board ship, as elsewhere, which, having no intellectual resources of any kind, is desperately bored when left alone. For invalids, old people and those who are travelling for health, rest and for a chance to read, the organised games and the social life form an intolerable nuisance. Unfortunately, refusal to take some part in them stamps one as a snob, or as a person with peculiar and unpleasant qualities. In fact, though not in name, the system is that of games at public schools.

Only on the big transatlantic liners, whose quick crossings and huge passenger lists are a bar to social intercourse, can one, on British ships, escape this dreadful "mateyness."

On this trip, fortunately for me, the Captain afforded me the privilege of sitting on a top deck, usually reserved for the officers. Thus I escaped the constant screaming and screeching of children, the rattle of deck games, and the gossip, scandal, badinage and banality of the passengers' deck. There is something very soothing, alike to your pride and mind, to have a whole deck to yourself on a liner when she is wending her way through oily, tropical seas, undisturbed by wind or wave. In some parts of the world, though never in home waters, there are recurrent days when the whole ocean is almost miraculously still, with never a ripple or a sea-bird to disturb its quiet surface. You get such days off the west coast of Africa.

Further north, off Rio de Oro, the atmosphere is clear as crystal, the sun sparkles on the blue waters, and the slight breeze from the shore brings a tang from the desert,



crisp and invigorating after its journey over hundreds of miles of clean sand.

But the real steamy tropics of the Bight of Benin are very different. The still air is impregnated with the smell of equatorial Africa—heavily-scented, languorous, seductive to some, repulsive and stale to others. The atmosphere is usually heavy, and the sun obscured by coppery clouds, the prelude to the intermittent rain-storms. One stifling night on this journey I was sleeping on deck. A few drops of rain woke me, and I was able to get below with no more mishap than soaked blankets and pyjamas; but within two minutes of its commencement the rain-storm had turned the deck into a stream inches deep in swirling water.

Each time I make the trip the antithesis between the desert and the swamp (which incidentally explains the rise and fall of Wahabism, and much of African and Asian history) strikes me afresh, because one can understand and sense it without seeing a square inch of the land. It reminds one of the contrast between a beautiful and virtuous woman, and one who is also beautiful but not virtuous.

Many features of a voyage to South Africa are attractive for the first time, but with repetition they become boring. There is, just as it is getting light, the sight of Madeira, looking like a great, green pincushion, all sparkling with diamonds—the twinkling lights of Funchal. Refreshing, after days at sea, are the luxuriance and the colour of the flowers in the gardens along the road up the mountains to the hotel, whence one gets a marvellous view of the island and ocean.

On the way back to the ship one begins the steep descent, on specially oiled cobble-stones, in chairs on

runners like those on a toboggan, guided by a man or boy who stands on the small board at the back. Often one appears to be going very fast in these strange conveyances, though I believe that no serious accident has ever occurred, except when two Englishmen induced their chairmen to race, with the result that there was a collision, and one of the Englishmen was killed.

At the bottom of the hill you leave your chair, and are transported to the pier in a sledge drawn by two white and sedate bullocks, whose steady tread is a relief after the excitement of the chair toboggan.

When, for the first time, one is on board a ship ploughing its way through a still and moonlit tropical sea, with the phosphorescence glittering round the bows, and silently, save for the low throb of the engines, one feels overwhelmed with the beauty of it all. One such night I remember when the full moon made a broad band of gold which nearly covered the whole sea between us and the horizon.

There is a great change when the ship is nearing Capetown. All the exotic languor of the tropics is left behind. The sea is no longer tawny, but a beautiful deep blue, and the wind, sharp and clean like a new steel knife, blows from the Antarctic, making the albatrosses sway from side to side as they extend their great breadth of wing to follow in the wake of the ship.

The first sight of Capetown and of Table Mountain is inspiring, and very pleasant is the journey across the rich, lowland country before the train ascends the steep gradients of the Drakensberg Range.

The mail train, after jogging along for a day or more across almost empty veldt, begins to gather speed as it approaches Johannesburg. For the last forty miles it

settles down into a steady hum and throb over a well-laid track, and makes you feel you are in an express train on a main-line route in Europe. On each side of you, as the train rushes on through the night, are great white mounds of earth, sizzling arc-lamps, the red glow of furnaces, great engine-houses, sidings and multitudes of rails. I have never seen anything like it, save in Pittsburgh and the Black Country.

When you reach the gold town itself, you can hardly believe that the great railway station and the bustling, feverish streets outside are only a few miles from the huge, silent spaces through which you have been travelling.

At Johannesburg I stayed with my friends, Sir Abe and Lady Bailey, the most solicitous and charming of hosts. Through the Baileys, as a Member of Parliament, and a Director of the Royal Exchange Assurance Company—which has many and important interests in South Africa—I got to know most of the principal politicians, business men, lawyers and journalists in the town. They were a humorous, friendly and hospitable lot of people. It would be a breach of confidence, and a poor return for hospitality received, to recount the most amusing and astonishing tales which they told about each other's early history, and their ways of rising to power and fame. The air of Johannesburg, like that of New York, sharpens the wits of its inhabitants.

One of the best of the stories I can tell. Just after Rhodes' death, several men aspired to be his successor. One of them was in the Rand Club, when there entered a Jew who, a pedlar in the early days of the Rand, had become a millionaire. He was justly popular in the town, and he never attempted to conceal his origin or

deny his race. Seeing one of the claimants to the vacant throne of the great man, he said, in his inimitable Aldgate East accent, "They tell me you think the mantle of Thethil Rhodes hath dethended on your shoulders. Take my advice, old boy, and don't wear it; thecond-'and clothes never fit. I've been in the bithneth myself."

I went racing and sight-seeing in Pretoria and elsewhere, and enjoyed my time in Johannesburg. Nevertheless, despite the hospitality and energy of its inhabitants, there is to me always something depressing about the town. It is a place of disappointment and of broken men, as well as of huge successes and fortunes. It is scarred with bitter memories of furious racial struggles between Boers and British, and of cruel and angry industrial conflicts; despite its steady growth and great material prosperity, it lives in perpetual dread of the failure and exhaustion of this or that mine, and eventually of all the mines upon which it depends. It has fine buildings and streets, and its residential suburbs are beautiful, but there are miles of districts where the prevailing impression is that of squat, ugly "new-country" houses, clanking, electric trams, hideous dumps, "poor whites," sweating, ragged Kaffirs, and tired mule-teams, all enveloped in thick, choking, red dust.

Thus, though very sorry to leave my charming host and hostess, I felt some relief when I found myself in the north-bound train for Bulawayo.

It was appallingly hot crossing the Kalahari, and at one moment the thermometer was 110° Fahr. in the carriages. At night occurred one of the greatest thunderstorms which I have ever experienced. It was pitch black and insufferably hot, and suddenly came a crash of thunder like a barrage of ten thousand guns, with

flashes of lightning which lit the horizon as if huge searchlights had been turned on it. The train had stopped to pick up a truck a short distance from the little station where we were scheduled to stay some minutes, and I had walked on. When the train came rattling and puffing up to the platform, though it was of great length, with scores of windows blazing with light, it looked strangely small, insignificant and insecure, in the great dark void torn by an African storm.

At Bulawayo, at the Victoria Falls and at Livingstone, I made many lasting friends, and I purchased some land near the Kafue river, and thus began a long connection with Northern Rhodesia.

We went from Bulawayo to the Falls on December 25th, and enjoyed an excellent Christmas dinner on the train. We were told—which was quite untrue—that it would be dangerous to travel on such a day, as everyone would be drunk. In fact, the Rhodesian train staff were not less courteous and efficient than they always are, and the only case of “Christmasing” I did encounter was a very amusing one.

Just after dinner the train stopped to take in water at a siding, in sole charge of which was a real Cockney. He had evidently had a gloriously successful Christmas. As I got out of the train to stretch my legs, he seized me by the hand and said I reminded him of “’is ’ole officer, Captain ’Ackett.” All my efforts to get him to release my hand failed, and I thought I should be left behind, but just before the train started he did let go, after I had heard a rather disjointed history of his life. He earnestly begged me to “tell the blokes up the line that good ’ole Bill Tasker’s orl right.” The last we saw of Bill Tasker was a solitary figure waving rather inconclusively, and

addressing the African bush, in the words of a then-popular song, that he *did* like to live beside the sea-side, he did like to live beside the sea.

After returning to the Union, I went to Colesberg to stay at Grootfontein on the Karroo, at a farm belonging to Sir Abe Bailey, and forming part of a property of no less than 250,000 acres.

In the Karroo bush, which looks like a kind of heather, stock of all sorts flourishes, and where there is irrigation, wheat and lucerne are grown. At Grootfontein, there were ostriches, merino sheep, cattle and mules; at another farm Sir Abe bred blood horses. But these farms, with their belts of fine old poplar, mulberry and pear-trees, and large cultivated fields, looked mere green specks on the majestic, dull, khaki-coloured vastness of the Karroo. I appreciated the aptness of Kipling's line :

“ Great spaces washed with sun.”

After dinner one night of full moon, I sat out on a kloof (hill) some distance from the farm, and read a book. Except for an occasional screech from a jackal, there was absolute stillness; no mosquitoes troubled me, for there are none in the Karroo, except after the infrequent rains, and near streams or pools. Here was none of that subconscious feeling, which never leaves one in tropical Africa, of necessity for constant vigilance against the hidden menace of marauding beast and deadly reptile. Across countless miles in every direction, all was peace and pale beauty.

Never have I felt fitter and better than on the Karroo. The air is pure and clean, as it should be 5,000 feet above sea-level, with no dirty town to defile it. The perpetual sunshine, so often an enemy to the human race, is here,

if properly treated, a friend, and does the cleansing which elsewhere is done by regular rains.

I liked the farmers and farm managers in the neighbourhood whose acquaintance I made. The English manager of one of Bailey's farms had been in the country twenty years, and had been badly wounded in the South African War. His six healthy children had all been born without the aid of a doctor, and their mother had brought them forth unattended even by another white woman.

The most interesting of the Dutchmen whom I saw on the Karroo was a rich farmer called Marney Vansaal, said to have been worth £100,000 a year. He boasted how he had deceived the British troops during the War, but at the time I met him he was reconciled to his British neighbours, and politically was a follower of General Botha. I had coffee, Boer cakes and a most amusing talk at his house; it was full of the heads of big game which his ancestors had shot—eland, koodoo, and many other types of antelope which had long since vanished from the Karroo.

It was sad to think that on this great plateau, where once roamed great herds of antelope and quagga, only the little springbok remained. The rest, driven out or remorselessly shot by the white man, were no longer even a memory. Where a traveller fifty years earlier could have seen lions or leopards, were only a few hares, jackal and meercats, with troops of baboons in the hills. Fortunately, of the birds, great white cranes, knorhaans, lesser bustards, the pretty secretary birds and numerous varieties of hawks still remained, and are there, I believe, to this day.

It is a great satisfaction to all lovers of wild life to know that in British and Belgian Colonial Africa the

authorities have taken to heart the lessons of Western America and of South Africa; so that, to-day, in their territories, few species of animals are in danger of extermination.

Conversations which I had with many people of British descent and sympathies confirmed me in my opinion that our Party in the House of Commons at home was right to deprecate, as premature, the grant of self-government to South Africa.

If the policy of re-settlement, devised and inaugurated by Lord Milner, had been continued for even two or three years longer, the economic and political conditions in South Africa in the subsequent twenty years might have been far more satisfactory. Lord Milner was surrounded by a brilliant group of young men, and he and they brought fresh ideas and ideals to interpose between the warring racial groups of Dutch and British. They almost succeeded in their work, but the General Election of 1906 at home was a fatal blow. Had their policy been continued, the disproportion in population between Dutch and British would have been greatly reduced, with benefit to both races. A settlement might have been reached of the native question. To-day, in 1932, the struggle, of which the South African War was no more than an incident, between Nationalist Dutch on the one hand, and the British and a minority of Dutch on the other, continues as fiercely as ever. On each of my visits to the Union, in 1911-12, in 1913, 1920 and 1930, I have found increasing indignation and despondency among a large section of the British, especially in Natal. It is useless to attempt to controvert their contention by pointing to the fact that the establishment of the Union was followed by a long period of a moderate



“ non-racial ” Government under Botha and Smuts, or to recall the participation of South Africa in the Great War. Their answer is that Botha and Smuts, men of great discernment and enlightenment, were the natural leaders of the progressive and broad-minded section of the South African Dutch. Had self-government been postponed until 1911 or 1912, these men would have come out just as strongly in favour of racial settlement and a united South Africa as an integral part of the Empire. They would have done this because, as patriotic South Africans, they realised the devastating effect of perpetual civil strife, a strife which is none the less real because to-day it is not carried on with weapons. They knew the menace inherent in the unsettled native problem, and how much South Africa needs what Milner and his “ kindergarten ” could have given.

A year or so ago, a South African said to me, “ Can you believe it possible that we in Natal, in one of the most loyal and progressive Provinces of the Empire, thirty years after the close of the South African War, have to submit to the indignity of seeing a flag other than the Union Jack on official buildings, of enduring bilingualism on our railways and in our public offices, and of knowing that in many parts of the Union no one of British birth or descent has a chance of getting a position under Government ? ”

It would be tactless, in the highest degree, for any British Member of Parliament to express an opinion on these matters. But I have always thought that there is a great measure of truth in the statement, which I quoted recently in the House of Commons, of a Canadian politician. About a hundred years ago, one of the many disputes which, in those days, arose between the United

States and Canada over land boundaries, fisheries and the like, had given rise to a debate in one of the provincial legislatures—I think that of Nova Scotia. Great Britain had refused to support the Canadian case. The speakers in the debate bitterly attacked our attitude. Then arose a very old man, one of the original United Empire Loyalists—people who, because of their unwavering attachment to the British connection, were driven out of the United States at the time of the Revolution, and had settled in Canada. He said, “Of what are you complaining? Have you not read history? Don’t you know that England always pays more heed to successful rebels than to devoted loyalists?” There are loyalists in Southern Ireland, and British South Africans in the Transvaal to-day who would echo the bitter irony of that old Nova Scotian of the eighteen thirties.

Of course, on merits, there is much to be said for having passed the South African Act of Union at the time when it did become law; the same consideration applies to the Irish Treaty; but the average Englishman, incapable, as he is, of long-sustained hatreds, and utterly ignorant of what racialism means in some countries, makes the mistake of thinking that *per se* a settlement by Act of Parliament solves both the problems of internal racial discord and those of external relationships. It is no use trying to convince him that he is wrong. Men, such as the late Mr. Leo Maxse, who pointed out year after year what was happening in South Africa, as a result of the Act of Union, or in Ireland, as a result of the Treaty, are believed to be ignorant fanatics. If you tell the ordinary man at home that it is easy to be generous by handing over your fellow-loyalists in different parts of the Empire to their religious, racial or political

opponents, he is blankly astonished. In considering a "settlement" the fate of the loyalist minority has never troubled him.

I returned to England in February, in time for the commencement of the 1912 Session. I found, in our Party, a state of affairs rather difficult to analyse.

Bonar Law's accession to the leadership had inspired and encouraged all the more vigorous elements among the rank and file of our Party, both in the House and in the country. They felt that here was a man "understood of the people." There was a noticeable increase of enthusiasm at public meetings, and the new Leader's name was cheered by supporters far more loudly than Mr. Balfour's had been during the time of his leadership. But in the House at first "Bonar" was disappointingly slow in settling into the saddle. In fact, he made two dangerous *gaffes* in the early part of the 1912 Session.

Bonar Law was very glib in answering interruptions, and too prone, in consequence, to notice them. In reply to one, he said that we would, if returned to power at the next Election, abolish the Health Insurance Act!

This statement caused consternation to all of us in the Unionist Party who were in favour of social reform, and something like a sensation in the country. A few days later Bonar Law wrote to *The Times* to say that what he had meant was that the Unionist Party, if returned to power, would substitute an Insurance Act of their own for the one on the Statute Book. This was a rather obvious "get-out" from an impossible situation.

The prolonged general coal strike, the first of a series of disastrous coal strikes, resulted in an Act to regulate hours of work. This was the first of many calamitous Acts of Parliament dealing with the coal trade.

Though there had been many district coal strikes before, here was the first instance of a universal strike, and, following, as it did, the railway strike, and the international and constitutional crises of the previous year, it greatly alarmed the House of Commons and the country. I have seldom seen Members of Parliament more anxious than during these debates on the Coal Mines Bill. The Prime Minister was visibly affected, to the point of his voice breaking, in announcing the collapse of negotiations between owners and workers. But the Unionist Party, rightly, as events have since proved, opposed the Bill as a panic measure, which would not conduce to a permanent settlement.

During the Second Reading of this Coal Mines Bill, Bonar Law made another serious blunder. To everyone's astonishment, Balfour, and not the Leader of the Opposition, moved the rejection of the Bill. No doubt our Leader had asked his predecessor to speak from motives of generosity, as well as to show that the recent change had not affected the solidarity of the Unionist Front Bench. But it was a great mistake. Both by the custom of the House, and by reason of his superior knowledge of trade and industry, the Leader of the Opposition was clearly the man for the task, and in failing to undertake it he gave the impression, false as it was, that he thought he had not sufficient dialectical ability to assume what was, in the circumstances, a grave responsibility in explaining to the House why we were opposing the Bill. "F. E.," though an admirer and supporter of Bonar Law, was horrified, and passed a note along the benches to me on which were written the words, "He has committed political suicide."

"A. J. B." made a poor speech, since he was dealing with

a subject which required a mastery of figures. His speech merely increased the condemnation of our Leader's action. People said in the Lobbies, "Bonar could have done the thing far better, but he funk'd it."

However, such incidents are quickly forgotten in the ebb and flow of politics; soon afterwards Bonar Law began steadily to improve his position in the House as Leader, and to increase his influence with his followers in the country.

The Home Rule and Welsh Disestablishment Bills were read for a second time in the early spring, and the stage was again set for a long, sustained and bitter fight, only to be interrupted on the 4th of August, 1914.

I spent the spring and early summer in making up for time lost by my illness in the previous year. I addressed a large number of meetings in my own and others' constituencies, spoke frequently in the House itself and on Committees, and took up again my duties as the Chairman of a Hospital and the Director of an Insurance Company. But I found time, in May, to visit Paris with a party of friends, and for the first and only time in my life I played polo at Bagatelle. I was in the winning team of the Prix de Larochefoucauld; our side was of a cosmopolitan character, consisting as it did of a Mexican, an Austrian, a Turk and me!

Since I had not fully recovered my strength, my doctor advised me to spend Fridays to Mondays out of London in a bracing climate by the sea, so I took a villa at Hardelot, near Boulogne, and went there to rest, bathe, bask in the sun, and walk in the forest each week-end in June and July. My friends, quite wrongly, believed that this weekly journey to France betokened some romantic and clandestine adventure. Those of them, however, who

visited me were satisfied that my motives were innocent enough. The old French couple, rejoicing in the sonorous name of Dagobert Fertou, who looked after my house and me, were in themselves a guarantee of respectability.

The forest of Hardelot in those days was of great interest to anyone who loved studying the ways of birds and beasts. Not more, I should suppose, than 2,000 acres in extent, surrounded on the landward side with cultivated and fairly thickly populated country, and bisected by a railway line on which the Paris-Boulogne expresses roared daily, yet it contained a remarkably varied fauna. There were wild boar and roe, and after rain the tracks of both were plainly visible in all directions. There were also pheasants and partridges in unusual profusion for France. Migratory birds of all sorts passed through the wood, and across the dunes in front. Once a dog which was with me chased a big pine marten in one of the open glades; hawks of many species roosted in the trees. The scenery was of the most wild and picturesque character, and in places one could have imagined oneself in Canada, a hundred miles from any habitation. Yet from the shore on clear days you could plainly see Folkestone and the English coast. The peaceful solitude of it all, and its marvellous air, was a wonderful change from the House of Commons and the Home Rule Bill.

In July at Earl's Court an attempt was made, in aid of a charity, to copy an Elizabethan joust. There was a Queen of Beauty (Lady Curzon),<sup>1</sup> with her attendant maidens, as well as many mounted knights in armour, who competed in the tilting and the *mêlée*. I took part

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Countess Howe.

in the latter. "The Blues" provided us with horses. Even these trained and sedate animals, accustomed to the breast-plates of their riders, were at first rather alarmed at the clank of the armour which we wore on chest, back, arms and legs. As for the helmets, they encircled our heads so completely that it was only possible to see, through the vizors, a short distance straight in front, and then only by keeping our heads slightly bent forward. The whole proceeding was, in my opinion, rather dangerous, but no one was hurt in either the tilting or the *mêlée*. The tournament was well staged and, I think, well performed, but it was not a financial success, probably owing to the high prices charged for seats. The hall was half-empty, and the spectators did not evince any great enthusiasm, though I noticed that Lord Curzon of Kedleston, who was among them, applauded us vigorously.

In July Lord Kitchener came home on leave from Egypt, where he had succeeded Sir Eldon Gorst as British Consul-General. I had known him since, with my parents in 1893, I had visited Egypt as a small boy. I had now the opportunity of a long talk with him at a week-end party, and was interested to hear him speak of the friendly sentiments towards Great Britain held by the Arabs, both of the Western Desert and of the Hedjaz. Unquestionably, this good feeling, strengthened as it was by Lord Kitchener's own personality, was of great assistance to us later on when the Arab revolt against Turkey was being organised, but I know of no ground for the charge sometimes made that Lord Kitchener, long before the War, had been secretly preparing an Arab rebellion.

In August I went to Canada with a party of men, many of them personal friends of mine, who, as I, had

business interests in that country; we travelled by special train, and visited a number of towns in both the East and West, meeting politicians and business men from all over the Dominion. It was a time of great political excitement, owing to the controversy about a trade agreement between Canada and the United States. This issue gave the Conservatives and Mr. Borden—whom I had met a few months earlier in England—their great opportunity, for in the next election they defeated Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the Liberals. The opponents of reciprocity in tariff arrangements with the United States accused the Liberals—the “Grits,” as they called them—of deliberately sacrificing Empire trade and Imperial sentiment. Undoubtedly, at the time in Canada fear of domination by United States financial and industrial interests was very great. In private conversation many of my Canadian friends in Winnipeg and elsewhere spoke very bitterly of the “Yanks,” even, in some instances, accusing us at home of pandering to them at Canada’s expense. I still remember vividly two incidents during my stay.

The first was the Calgary Stampede, at which took place various events associated with what is now called a rodeo. The town was filled to its utmost capacity with cowboys and spectators from all over English-speaking North America, but perfect order was maintained alike at the function itself and in the streets. Western Canadians pride themselves on possessing police forces in both provinces and cities of a very different character from that of the rough-and-ready “cops” south of the border; certainly the London police could not have behaved with greater tact, courtesy, authority and dignity than did those whom I saw at Calgary. Both the Royal North-



West Mounted Police and the City Police were a magnificent set of men.

The Duke of Connaught was then Governor-General of Canada, and a most successful one. I have had the honour of knowing His Royal Highness for over forty years, and have seen him in more than one country. His charm and accessibility to all make him popular everywhere, but I was amazed and quite thrilled by the patriotic demonstration which greeted him when he arrived in the ring in an open carriage with four horses and postilions, attended by a splendid R.N.-W.M.P. escort. The whole audience rose and cheered again and again. "We're showing the 'Grits' and their Yankee friends," said an ardent Canadian Conservative politician to me, "that Canada's still British."

As a matter of fact, however, I didn't think that there was the slightest tinge of party political feeling in the cheers. They were a tribute to the Throne and the Governor-General himself.

A few days later we arrived at a very new, but very pushful town in Saskatchewan, just after a severe thunderstorm, and found the streets flooded; consequently, our civic reception and an automobile tour of the town, had both to be abandoned. Notwithstanding, we were able to buy editions of the evening paper describing the reception, with accounts of how we had been "whirled round the town in swift automobiles, headed by his popular Worship, Mayor — in a big tourer."

In the evening we were entertained by the Mayor and Corporation at dinner. In the course of his speech the Mayor said, "This is the most progressive town in the finest Province of the best Dominion in the greatest Empire which the world has ever seen. I have spoken

of our material progress. But are we purely material? No, Sir, we are not. Not on your life. Why, we have right here in our city one hundred thousand dollars' worth of churches."

From Canada I went to Virginia to stay with my friend, Mrs. Brooks,<sup>1</sup> at her house, Mirador, near Greenwood. En route south by the Baltimore and Ohio railroad one caught glimpses of such well-known names as Manassas and Bullrun.

At Mirador I met Mr. Langhorne, father of Mrs. Dana Gibson and of Lady Astor. He was a most charming and witty old gentleman, with a local reputation for being the only man on earth able—for he had a will of iron—to control his daughter Nancy. I had a delightful time in glorious weather. We rode, went to tennis-parties, drove miles over the red-dirt roads and attended a negro revival meeting.

There is something, at least about this part of Virginia, which recalls Southern Ireland as it was in old days. There is the same neighbourliness, high spirits, sense of humour and love of sport—a very pleasing mixture. A cynic would say that there was a good deal of resemblance between the attitude of the old squirearchy in Ireland towards the Irish labourer and that of the Virginian plantation owners towards their negroes. Both practised a tyranny softened by a tolerant, if contemptuous, feeling of regard for the subjects of it.

Early in September I sailed from New York in the *Olympic*. Her sister ship, the *Titanic*, had sunk earlier in the year after striking an iceberg. Mainly in consequence of this, the *Olympic* was nearly empty. Such is the power of superstitious fear.

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) The Honble. Mrs. Robert Brand.

Almost three years later to a day I sailed on the same ship from Southampton for Gallipoli. She was full of troops from stem to stern. I believe she carried more souls than had up to then ever been on a British ship.

We were in very real danger on that voyage, though not from icebergs, for a submarine attacked the *Olympic*, and the torpedo only missed her by a few yards.

## CHAPTER XV

The Home Rule controversy—Mr. Birrell's administration—Welsh Disestablishment—The Marconi Case—Revival of the "Food Tax" controversy—Hunting in Sussex and Leicestershire—Social Life in 1912-1913—Reaction from Victorianism and Edwardianism—"Ragtime" parties—The Russian Ballet—Belvoir, Cliveden, Taplow and Hackwood—The "New Elizabethans"—War losses—An English type—Death of my mother—Another visit to Canada and the States—Mr. Walter Hines Page.

PARLIAMENT sat all through the autumn of 1912 and, save for a brief interval at Christmas, until it was prorogued on March 5th, 1913. On the 10th of the same month the new Session began.

The spirit of faction, rancour and party violence in this period exceeded even that of the constitutional crisis of 1911, and it continued unabated right up to the outbreak of War.

First and foremost came the question of Home Rule for Ireland.

Political memories are notoriously short. Many people have forgotten, and many others are too young to remember, what immediately preceded the re-emergence of this question in the second Parliament of 1910. Now that, thanks to Mr. de Valera, relations between Great Britain and the Irish are again strained, it is worth while to set down the facts.

At the end of 1905, when the Unionist Government left office, Ireland was more peaceful than it had been for

a generation or more. This is well brought out in Lord Midleton's new book, "*Ireland—Dupe or Heroine?*", and should not be ignored by any person who wishes to do justice to the policy of the Unionist Party. Law and order were maintained, agrarian crime was fast disappearing, and the Royal Irish Constabulary was, in most districts, able to protect, without undue show of force, persons of all classes going about their lawful occasions. This régime was not based merely on what Radicals and Nationalists in those days called "repression"—that is, insistence on the observance of the law of the land. There had been, for at least two decades, steady progress in reforms which were beneficial to the Irish people, and especially to cultivators of the soil. The Irish Development Acts had provided for much-needed new roads, quays, harbour improvements and public works. Everywhere advantage was being taken of the Land Purchase Acts, and a new class of large and small farmer-owners was arising.

The initiative of the late Sir Horace Plunkett, aided by Government money and sympathy, had developed into an agricultural co-operative movement which was envied by farmers in England, Scotland and Wales. Thus, and in other ways, the malevolent activities of the Gombeen man—the exact counterpart of the Bania in India—were being effectively checked. The establishment of County Councils and other Local Government bodies had afforded scope for all Irishmen who wished to devote their energies to improving the roads, the housing, the sanitation and the health services in their country. Though Southern Ireland continued to vote for Home Rule, the downfall of Parnell had so split the Nationalist Party that its effectiveness was greatly lessened. When a powerful

political party breaks in two, the popular force behind the factions can be largely discounted. It may be unmoral to put into practice the maxim "*Divide et Impera*," but when your opponents divide themselves, it is only common sense to pay less heed to their clamour.

The substitution of a Liberal for a Unionist Government in December 1905 had immediately a prejudicial effect upon the administration of law and the maintenance of order in Southern Ireland.

In those days the police, and persons holding small offices under the Government in South Ireland, were in a position not unlike that of the Indian police and petty officials to-day. They were always in danger of social ostracism and of boycott. Their religious advisers were in the main hostile to the Government, and the Irish priesthood has seldom been averse from using spiritual means for political ends; the analogy is almost complete between the pressure then exerted upon men of the R.I.C. and that to which Indian police, if they be Hindus, are subjected to-day. The R.I.C. did not mind, and the Indian police do not mind, this sort of thing, if they are always assured of their superiors' support in the due and impartial discharge of their duty.

Before the Irish Treaty every published word from the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant had its immediate repercussion in Ireland, and every word spoken by the Secretary of State or the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for India in Parliament to-day finds an echo in India.

For nearly seven years I was the sole Ministerial representative of the India Office in the House of Commons. In the opinion of the House and of the public, my pronouncements were of no more importance than

anything said by any Under-Secretary—and that is not much in these days of declining respect for politicians. But every time I was on my legs I felt instinctively that I had to guard myself against the use of a word or of a phrase which might embarrass the Indian administration. Of course, a Conservative Minister has the initial advantage of knowing that his supporters will approve of his carefulness. For a Minister of a “Left” Party, whether Radical or Socialist, things are not so easy: it is certain that his followers will characterise as repressive the enforcement of the law against any person who can put forward the flimsiest excuse that he is actuated by political motives in his resistance. A Minister, in these circumstances, has to show considerable strength of will if he is to support his official subordinates. Some men of the 1906 Liberal Government had the requisite qualities for the position of Chief Secretary for Ireland, but Mr. Augustine Birrell, who filled the post during the greater part of the life of that Parliament, emphatically had not. He answered questions about crime in Ireland with an air of jaunty unconcern, and both his answers and his speeches were permeated with a sardonic humour which made and maintained his reputation for “Birrellisms.” Unfortunately, he often gave the impression that he regarded Ireland as a huge joke, and the police and officials as the funniest things in it. The effect in Ireland was calamitous; agrarianism and midnight outrages increased, and the police became discouraged. Nor was this the whole of the story. It did not please Mr. Birrell’s sentimental Radicalism to find Dublin Castle staffed with supporters of what Nationalists called the “English Garrison,” and when posts became vacant, they were filled by men of whom no one could say that

they had any sympathy with Unionism. Of course, the new occupants were not active politicians, so that the Government could not directly be accused of filling Civil Service appointments exclusively with the supporters of their Nationalist allies. The thing was done with cunning and dexterity.

But Mr. Birrell and these men between them so spoilt a machine which had hitherto withstood incipient revolutionary movements in Ireland that the task of the gunmen was made possible from 1916 onward.

Such was the administrative effect in Ireland of the change of Government at Westminster. The attempt to produce a fundamental constitutional alteration in the relations of that country with Britain was slower in coming, but as disastrous in the long run.

The Government made no effort to introduce a Home Rule Bill in the 1906 Parliament. There was no reason for it to do so. Home Rule Bills had unhappy memories for Liberal Leaders. The Irish Nationalists were not natural allies of the bulk of the men who made up the huge Liberal majority; the two Parties were, in fact, mutually antipathetic. The average Liberal Back Bencher believed fervently in the principles of the Reformation, and in those of the winning side in the Civil War. The Nationalists were ardent Roman Catholics almost to a man, and regarded Cromwell, with some reason, as having been one of Ireland's worst enemies. Many Liberals were supporters of the temperance movement and avowed enemies of the brewers and licensed victuallers. There was scarcely a teetotaler among the Nationalists, and many of them were, in their private business capacities, associated, perfectly honourably and openly, with the liquor traffic. The 1909 Budget



did nothing, as I have shown in an earlier chapter, to draw the two sides together.

Everything, however, was changed by the two 1910 Elections, which made the Government dependent upon Irish Nationalist support. The Liberal Party, since it split in the eighties of last century, has had more than once, when in power, to rely upon other Parties for a majority, and, when not in power, been obliged to support another Party in office. There may have been no alternative course, but I consider that to suggest that this action is in the highest interests of the State is to talk the merest cant. Liberals would like the country to believe that they serve the nation by acting as a moderating or balancing factor, thus preventing a straight fight between the "Haves" and the "Have nots." To my mind, such an idea connotes a see-saw balanced by sitting near the middle. In actual practice, as we have seen in the last three years, the Liberal Party helps to weigh down the plank to the Right and to the Left alternately. I have carefully eschewed references to current politics, but I must say that I am not surprised at the bewilderment shown by Liberals in the country at the complete change of view displayed, within a year, by Liberal Ministers in the National Government. If they justified this change by a professed alteration in their opinions, there could be no criticism, save by those who doubted their honesty; when, however, they assume that no justification is required, because it is in accordance with Liberal principles to support in alternation Governments of the Left and of the Right, one naturally asks oneself what is the composition of those principles. Indeed, it is legitimate to ask, further, whether the continued existence of the Liberal Party does not merely complicate the

whole political situation, without helping to solve its problems.

How the Home Rule controversy eventually centred upon Ulster, and how frightful were the possibilities of the crisis which arose over this matter, I must leave to another chapter.

In the autumn of 1912, and through the early months of 1913, the Home Rule Bill was passed through the Commons and rejected in the Lords. An unprecedented incident, leading to an ugly scene, occurred during its passage in the Commons.

On the financial resolution of the Bill, the Government were defeated by twenty-two votes on an amendment moved by Sir Frederic Banbury.<sup>1</sup>

Two days later the Government endeavoured to rescind the amendment. The Speaker ruled that, while there was no precedent for such action, the motion was not out of order. Great turmoil followed, and the House was adjourned. While Members were dispersing violent incidents took place. Order papers were hurled at Ministers, and Mr. Ronald McNeill,<sup>2</sup> normally a very well-conducted Member of the House, threw a book at Mr. Churchill.

The next day a huge crowd collected in the Chamber in expectation of further trouble, but, as always on the day after a "row," complete quiet prevailed in the House of Commons. Mr. McNeill handsomely and gracefully apologised to Mr. Churchill; Mr. Churchill, as handsomely and gracefully, accepted the apology. The House, as it invariably does in such circumstances, cheered both men loudly and impartially, and was

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Lord Banbury of Southam, P.C.

<sup>2</sup> Now (1932) Lord Cushendun, P.C.

evidently very pleased both with its own magnanimity and generosity and with that of the two protagonists. Personally, I thought the whole situation irresistibly comic, but I managed to keep a straight face, and murmured sympathetic "Hear hears!" with the rest. I love the House of Commons, but I have often thought it to be very, very funny when it has believed it is being most solemn and dignified, and intolerably boring when it thinks it is being very humorous; there are occasions, which fall within neither category, when it does become the greatest and most fascinating deliberative Assembly in the world.

After questions, to the chagrin of the Liberals and Nationalists, the Speaker suggested, acting, as he said, as "Moderator" an adjournment—it was a Thursday—until Monday, to see if any arrangement could be found which would be acceptable to both the Government and the Opposition. This course was accepted, and on the Monday we were told that the Financial Resolution, with some alterations, was to be recommitted. Thus we gained our point.

Not content with having on their hands one great controversial measure of first-class importance, the Government introduced and carried a Welsh Disestablishment Bill, which was also rejected in the Lords. This Bill aroused great resentment in Church of England circles, and was strongly opposed by the Unionist Party, but my recollections are that the debates were somewhat dull for the ordinary layman, concerned as they frequently were with researches into the writings of Giraldus Cambrensis and other early historians whose accuracy is not above suspicion. A Trades Union Bill

was also carried, but a Franchise Bill had to be dropped on a technical difficulty.

The House was bitterly divided, on non-Party lines, over a women's suffrage amendment, and we had the unedifying spectacle, then very rare, but now, alas ! so common, of Ministers fiercely attacking one another.

Though I hesitate, at this distance of time, to rake up the matter, no mention of this Session would be complete without a reference to the Marconi case, which arose over an accusation that three Ministers—two of whom are as prominent in public life to-day as they were then—had improperly bought shares in the American Marconi Company at a time when His Majesty's Government was in contractual relationship with the English Marconi Company. Since this relationship could materially affect the price of the shares of the English Company, which in turn would react upon the American one, it was urged that the acquisition and ownership of these shares by Ministers amounted to a corrupt practice. A Committee of Inquiry, composed of Members of the House, was constituted to report upon the affair. The Committee found that some of the graver charges, made outside the House, against the three Ministers were without foundation.

Unfortunately, it was impossible to produce a unanimous report, and the majority one evaded most of the issues. Generally, it was held in political circles that the conduct of the Ministers concerned had been imprudent, but not dishonourable. Some Liberal newspapers showed courage and freedom from Party bias by joining with their Unionist contemporaries in criticising the Ministers and the majority report alike.

An official Opposition motion of censure was defeated on a Party vote. Very bitter feeling arose over this matter. The House of Commons has, within its portals, but outside the Chamber, a domestic social life of its own : stories are told and nicknames given which seldom get beyond the smoke-room and the inner Lobbies ; most of them are too Rabelaisian, too libellous, or too personal for the Lobby correspondent to repeat, but the victims usually accept them with good humour. In the 1906 Parliament a prominent Nationalist and equally prominent Labour Member were known respectively as "Pongo" and "Consul," owing to their fancied resemblance to the two celebrated performing apes. The House, as a whole, had an affectionate regard for them both, and I think that neither resented his nickname—not even when, as frequently happened during late sittings, one or other became obstreperous and was greeted with loud cries of "Chain, chain!", "Cage, cage!" or "Give him a nut to keep him quiet!"

Far removed from this sort of friendly, if school-boyish, chaff were the furious cries of "Sticky fingers" which greeted Sir Rufus Isaacs<sup>1</sup> and Mr. Lloyd George when they rose to answer questions at the height of the Marconi controversy. I can see them both now in my mind's eye—the one very pale, but with a composed and impassive face, the other flushed and angry, looking as though he would like to hurl his jeering, mocking Tory enemies from one of his native hill-tops. It was an unedifying spectacle, and justified what a former M.P. said to me at the time, "I am ashamed of the House of Commons ; I don't know who are the worse, Ministers who allow

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) The Marquess of Reading, P.C., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.C.V.O.

themselves to get into such a scrape, or all of you who shout gutter-snipe abuse at them."

During this autumn and winter there was a recrudescence of the food duties controversy. Lord Northcliffe's newspapers wanted all mention of duties on food to be dropped from the Unionist programme. The majority of Tariff Reformers and several Unionist newspapers vehemently opposed this course. The *Daily Express*, which has shown an enviable consistency in these matters, and the *Pall Mall Gazette* attacked Lord Northcliffe with vigour, describing him as "Uncle Five Heads," in reference to the daily newspapers of different complexions which he owned. Finally, as a result of a petition by their followers to the Leaders of the Party in both Houses,<sup>1</sup> a compromise between the two factions was reached to the effect that the official policy to be advocated at the next Election should be an immediate tariff on manufactured goods, but no duty on food-stuffs until after the Dominions had been consulted. Though no actual promise was given, there is little doubt that, but for the intervention of the War, this would have been the official policy of the Party.

Later in the winter certain Conservative candidates at bye-elections threatened to oppose any form of fresh taxation on food. The executive of the Tariff Reform League, of which I was a member, appointed some of us to form a deputation and interview Mr. Bonar Law, who was sympathetic, but non-committal. The threatened split was, however, averted. We had a successful conference of the Unionist Party in London at which complete unanimity prevailed. Afterwards we attended a special music-hall performance at the Hippodrome.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Lansdowne and Mr. Bonar Law.

“ F. E.” remarked to me that he was quite sure “ Bonar ” had never been in any music-hall before in his life !

That autumn and winter I worked hard in the House and on Committees, and more than once got into trouble with the Chair; that was the common experience of most of the young Tory fighters in that swashbuckling political era; however, the Speaker was tactful and very fair to us. All through those years Lord Ullswater had no easy task in a House so difficult to control, and so permeated with the fiercest passion and prejudice.

At this time also I became a Governor of Raine’s School in Stepney, thus adding one more to the list of Committees and organisations outside the House with which I was actively associated. As usual, despite a broken collar-bone early in the season, I managed to get some hunting. Before Christmas, whenever I could spare a day, I hunted in my own constituency with the Crawley and Horsham, and Lord Leconfield’s, and stayed with my great friends and relations, the late Colonel and Lady Beatrice Rawson. They gave me a second home in Sussex when mine was let. One of their daughters<sup>1</sup> jumped big fences and rode her own line with a courage and decision which I have never seen equalled by any child of her age. Precocity in horsemanship is sometimes the prelude to a crashing fall in youth and a shaken nerve in later life. But as I, who have seen her on a horse in recent years in both Leicestershire and India, can testify, Lady Warrender’s prowess remains unabated.

After Christmas I spent a series of delightful weekends staying with my friends, Charlie and Edie Castle-reagh,<sup>2</sup> at Springfield near Oakham, and hunted with

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) Lady Warrender.

<sup>2</sup> Now (1932) The Marquess and Marchioness of Londonderry.

the Cottesmore, Quorn and Belvoir Hounds. I saw a thing with the Cottesmore on one of these visits which I have never seen before or since. One day there had been hard frost and snow, but a sudden thaw had made hunting just possible by mid-day, so a "bye-day" was arranged. There were deep snowdrifts about, which made riding dangerous and difficult, and the hunt servants rode ponies; the uniqueness of the occasion for me lay in the fact that all the fit hounds in the kennel in both the dog and bitch packs were taken out; this was a sensible arrangement for exercising the two packs after a long period of inactivity. As we did not meet until past twelve at the Kennels, it did not so tire the dog hounds as to prevent them being ready for their advertised meet two days later. We went into Burleigh Woods, and I think it was intended we should stay there, in view of the state of the ground. But one of the foxes in the big woodlands decided otherwise.

He went away by Springfield, the outskirts of Oakham and Catmose to Lax Hill; there was a good scent and a most tremendous cry from the united throats of nearly fifty couple of hounds. We were a tiny field, and I thought, as we made our way precariously by hunting gates across the Egerton Vale, what a good sporting picture could be made of the huge pack pressing relentlessly across the snow-encrusted countryside on this cold, clear, steely January day.

I have referred to my broken collar-bone. The accident occurred in Sussex. I was riding a young horse, recently bought from Mr. John Drage, but not, at the time, paid for. He was to prove one of the best horses I ever owned, but on this occasion he fell, through no fault of his, in jumping some rails, owing to a greasy take-off.



As the bone was broken near the extremity, where a fracture is practically painless, I got up and pursued my horse across a field; but he jumped the next fence on to a tarmac road, and, at great risk to himself, galloped down it for a mile or more, when he was caught in a yard.

As it happened, Mr. Drage was staying in Sussex, and was driving with a friend of mine from the meet when the horse in his wild career galloped by, missing the pole of the carriage by inches. "Our Member," said my friend, "is all right, as I saw him on his feet back there; I only hope his horse won't break his leg before he is caught." "So do I," said Mr. Drage, "especially as he is still my horse, and not yet his!"

Despite the clashes, stresses and dangers of the time, there was, in the autumn and winter of 1911-1912, plenty of interest and amusement to be found in the social life of London and the big country-houses for young politicians like myself. In the two or three years immediately preceding the War great changes came over Society, and conditions came much more closely to resemble those of to-day than those of even five years earlier. Gone was the solemn and conventional stateliness of the Victorian era. As a result mainly of taxation, a few of the "Great Houses" were about to close their doors, and they had all lost some of their attraction, since many people had ceased to want to attend At Homes in even the most famous of them, for that meant standing, being intensely hot and uncomfortable, and listening, as a rule, to vapid conversation for the best part of an hour. As many of the younger generation could afford neither the time nor the money to go shooting, and as polo, golf, tennis and foreign travel were becoming powerful rivals to the gun,

what may be described as the appurtenances of these great houses, in the shape of invitations to shooting-parties, were no longer so keenly sought after.

Gone, too, was the florid magnificence of the Edwardian era, once described as "eating too many big meals, meeting too many rich Jews, and shooting too many fat pheasants."

Society had split into many divisions and sub-divisions; there were cliques and sets, almost as innumerable as those of to-day; in some of the smartest and most amusing, the Victorian standard of birth, and the Edwardian one of wealth, could neither of them, *per se*, ensure entrance for any individual; you had, in the full meaning of the word, to be able to entertain or to be entertaining, or to have attained to some distinction without being a bore about it.

From the point of view of Society, London had become, partly as a result of long autumn Sessions of Parliament, as important a place in the autumn and winter as in the so-called season. Many, even of those who owned large houses there, were beginning to look on the country as a place in which to spend only week-ends, and the Christmas, Whitsuntide and Easter holidays. This was not altogether a good thing, and I remember George Wyndham once observing to me, "—— says he can't afford to live in his house and do his duty as a country gentleman; yet he spends far more money in giving lunches at the Ritz, dinners at Claridge's and suppers at the Carlton than it would cost to keep his country home open through the year. Though he thinks he is a valuable member of the Conservative Party, he is really, by overthrowing the tradition of his class, helping the Radicals to destroy the English land system."

This was true enough, and no one was more entitled to make the criticism than George Wyndham, for he represented the English country-gentleman at his best. In his person strikingly handsome, he had an irresistible charm, as well as a very perceptive and sympathetic mind. He was a man of considerable erudition, and no mean writer on classical and romantic subjects. He loved the country, its peace, its traditions, its agriculture, and its sport and pursuits, at many of which he excelled. When he died, shortly before the War, after a fine career in Parliament and a period of short but meritorious Army service, I missed him more than I had missed any man of an older generation except my own father.

It was the fashion, in the winter of 1912-1913, to give what were then known as "ragtime parties." A host, or hostess, would ask friends and tell them to bring their friends, often at a few days', or even a few hours', notice. After dinner there would be dancing to the music of ragtime, provided by two or three musicians, who were sometimes negroes from the Southern States. Tunes, which were the parents of modern jazz, such as *Alexander's rag-time band*, *Everybody's doing it* and *I want to go back home to Dixie*, were played, and there were often amateur performances of cake-walks or *apache* dances by the guests. Everything was cheerful and informal, a pleasing contrast to the starchy *bals blancs* of the Edwardian era, which I had attended in my extreme youth. About the time of which I am writing, the modern system of big charity balls at hotels began. I remember that I saw with astonishment, at the first of these which I attended, a row of dowagers carefully chaperoning a number of high-born and impeccable maidens cheek by jowl with other young

ladies, who were neither high-born nor impeccable, but sufficiently attractive to be members of the chorus of the musical comedies then running in London.

That winter there was a season of the Russian Ballet, which owed its immense success to something more than mere fashion and dinner-table discussion.

Pavlova's dancing, and the setting and staging of *Petrouchka* and *Cog d'Or* with Karsavina, revealed to London a new art.

There were some country houses, in those days, where there was not only boundless hospitality, but where the fortunate guest was certain to find interesting and amusing people of all sorts. Typical of these were Belvoir, Cliveden, Taplow and Hackwood.

At Belvoir, against a background of historic interest and magnificence, was a *milieu* of great charm, intellectual vitality and artistic perception, to which the host and hostess and the lovely Manners sisters<sup>1</sup> liberally contributed.

About Cliveden much has been written, though nothing can exaggerate the generosity and catholicity of Waldorf and Nancy Astor's hospitality. You would meet there such writers as Barrie, Kipling and Belloc, with statesmen and politicians of all Parties (the worse political feeling was, the more Nancy liked to bring opponents together and keep them, as she invariably did, good-humoured and in roars of laughter throughout the party), boys and girls of all ages, and at least one "lame dog" from at home or abroad, whom the host or hostess was helping unselfishly and disinterestedly to surmount some stile. Moreover, their system continues unimpaired

<sup>1</sup> Now (1932) The Marchioness of Anglesey, Lady Violet Benson, and Lady Diana Cooper.

in their other houses, though Cliveden is, I believe, shut up.

At Taplow, Lord and Lady Desborough are still the most successful of hosts and hostesses, and give the lie to the Continental sneer that in England it is impossible to find good conversation outside a University, or intelligence with beauty.

At Hackwood, in that pre-war era, Lord Curzon collected parties of professors, writers and statesmen, and of the young and amusing of both sexes. I have already referred to his gifts as a host; sometimes his sense of humour, as Mr. Shane Leslie has pointed out in a recent book, was of a rather Rabelaisian kind, very unexpected from such a source.

These were the days when the "New Elizabethans" burst upon London. They were a group of young men of promise, daring and originality. It is perhaps easy to be over-sentimental about war losses among young men, but I believe that individually and collectively the deaths in the War of men in this group, such as Rupert Brooke, the Grenfell brothers,<sup>1</sup> Charles Lister, Edward Horner and Patrick Shaw-Stewart, explain the comparative absence of genius or distinction among men to-day in the early forties, and the continued literary prominence of weary old shop-soiled geniuses of sixty and upwards, who exhausted their power to *épater les bourgeois* twenty years ago.

There were other men, some of them much older, but all of them still young in spirit, whom it was a pleasure to meet in those days at one or other of the houses which I have mentioned. In their several

<sup>1</sup> Captain the Honble. Julian and Captain the Honble. William Grenfell, killed in action.

individual ways they all contributed greatly to the success of a house-party. Death has made great gaps in the ranks of these, among whom I would include Charlie Beresford,<sup>1</sup> the Grenfell twins,<sup>2</sup> Hugh Cecil, Maurice Baring, Evan Charteris, Basil Blackwood,<sup>3</sup> Charlie Mills and Charlie Helmsley.<sup>4</sup> Directly he came into a room, any one of them raised alike the spirits and vitality of everyone in it. How frequently, in this country, is the reverse true of both men and women! There is the man to be found in the best regiments and most exclusive circles of whom his friends, with unconscious humour, say, "He is *such* a nice quiet fellow." I have a genuine admiration for these men, because I know they are far braver in action or on a horse than I ever was or could be, and belong to a caste which has sacrificed its lives in thousands for the Empire. But their presence upon their environment is depressing. It is not always realised that a perfectly good, silent bore is as disastrous an element in any gathering as his opposite number, the verbose and exuberant one. All of us know so well the sort of man who, save at long intervals, never speaks a word. When he utters, it is to let drop a few badly expressed and completely uninteresting comments on fox-hunting, golf or the failings of the Leader of the Tory Party. The tragi-comedy of the War in the British Army was the misunderstanding between such men and the many and diverse other types of Englishmen, Scotsmen, Irish and Welsh.

In March 1913 my mother died, in her seventy-first year. She had long been an invalid from rheumatoid

<sup>1</sup> Admiral of the Fleet, Lord Beresford, G.C.B.

<sup>2</sup> Captain Francis Grenfell, V.C., and Captain Riversdale Grenfell, killed in action.

<sup>3</sup> Lord Basil Blackwood, killed in action.

<sup>4</sup> The Earl of Feversham, killed in action.

arthritis in its most painful and acute form. I have never seen anyone bear suffering with such fortitude and cheerfulness.

Her sympathy and understanding made her hundreds of friends, while her goodness and unselfishness to me at all times were such as to make me frequently ashamed of my own shortcomings. As I had lived in her home in London ever since my father's death, I missed her very much, and could no longer live alone; so, for a time, I stayed under the hospitable roof of my friend, Charlie Mills, and his mother, Lady Hillingdon.

At the end of April I went to Canada on business connected with my investments there. I also took the opportunity, as a member of the Court of Directors of the Royal Exchange Assurance Company, to visit our branches in Montreal and Winnipeg, and later on in Boston.

Thanks to the kindness of friends, such as the Vincent Merediths in Montreal and the Rogers in Winnipeg, my hotel bills were kept very low, for most of the time I was staying in private houses. I often feel guilty when I think that we do far less for Dominion friends in Great Britain than they do for us in their countries. I shall always remember with gratitude the kindness and sympathy of my Canadian friends on this trip, when I was naturally feeling sad and depressed after my bereavement, and, in addition, was strained and tired by constant travel and business.

Later I went to the United States and paid a brief visit to Virginia, where the Southern spring was in its full glory. In the middle of May I sailed for England in order to be in time for the annual training of the Sussex Yeomanry, in which I commanded a squadron.

Among my fellow-passengers on the *Baltic* was Mr. Walter Hines Page, destined to be one of the best-known of all the United States Ambassadors to Great Britain. He was on his way to take up his appointment.

In the Captain's cabin after dinner each evening he and I, and two or three others, sat and talked about men and affairs. Mr. Page was deeply interested in the work of the Rockefeller Research Institute, and believed very strongly that the whole world, materially speaking, would eventually find salvation from scientific research. What has happened since seems to show that, both in war and in peace-time, the results of scientific research may destroy our civilisation.



## CHAPTER XVI

Events at home and abroad—Unrest in India—Death of Mr. Alfred Lyttelton, M.P.—The Victoria Falls—Nothern Rhodesia—The Kafue Flats—Bulawayo—Beira—Kenya—An incident at Naples—Ulster and her resistance—The summer of crisis—A visit to Germany—The eve of War.

DURING the summer of 1913 the Home Rule Bill, the Welsh Disestablishment Bill, and a Plural Voting Bill were again passed and again rejected by the House of Lords. The debates were not very interesting, as everyone knew that the real crisis would come in the Session of 1914, since, under the Parliament Act, these Bills would then be passed over the head of the Lords, and the gathering storm-clouds would break in Ireland.

Abroad the situation was as disquieting as at home. In Germany the naval-building programme was being carried out with unabated vigour; in India, a long series of outrages and unrest had culminated in an attempt to assassinate the Viceroy. Lord Hardinge was seriously wounded. Some of his *entourage* were killed and injured.

It is worth while pointing out that the inference of so many critics of the present Indian Constitution, that before it came into existence Indian unrest since the Mutiny was almost unknown, is negatived by the events which occurred from 1910 right up to the time of the War. There is a periodicity about subversive outbreaks in India which impartial students of her history would do well to note. Such outbreaks start suddenly

and are soon carried forward with a crescendo of fanatical enthusiasm. At last the Government of India, or the Home Government, or both, realise that strong measures are necessary if the power of the Raj is to be maintained. Then, for a while, honours are easy, but as Indians are seldom capable of sustained resistance when the leaders are in gaol, everything gradually dies down, to start all over again eight or ten years later.

In the summer of 1913 the Unionist Party and the Opposition Front Bench in the House of Commons suffered a great loss by the death of Alfred Lyttelton from a cricketing accident. By none was the presence of their genial comrade more missed than by us younger Members of the Party.

I sailed for South Africa in July to visit my farm, and take part in a shooting trip in Northern Rhodesia. A Cambridge undergraduate, Douglas Harvey, who was anxious to see Africa, came with me. He and his elder brother<sup>1</sup> were killed in France on the same day of 1914.

Two undergraduate friends of Douglas were on the ship, and I invited them to come and stay at my farm. On the way north from Capetown we were joined by Reggie Barnes, at that time commanding the 10th Hussars at Potchefstroom. Though Reggie and I had seen the Victoria Falls before, the rest of the party had not, and we left the train to look at the majestic dignity of the great gorge. The measured thunder of the huge cataract of water, with a white, foaming, tumbling mass of water below, is a perpetual fascination.

<sup>1</sup> The sons of the Rev. E. D. L. Harvey, of Beedingwood, Horsham, who was Chairman of the Conservative Association in my Division for over twenty years, and is now its President. He has been my close friend and political counsellor in Sussex for more than a quarter of a century.

All lovers of beauty should be grateful to successive Rhodesian administrations for preventing the Falls from being vulgarised, as has Niagara. Even the railway bridge is a graceful structure, and not in disharmony with its surroundings.

We spent some time on my farm, near Kafue, eating good and plenteous food, but living rather rough, and sleeping in the open. I tried to help my manager in his task of breaking new land, and one day drove a disc plough over virgin soil for some hours in the heat of the afternoon, with the result that the sun peeled most of the skin off my arms.

African shooting-trips are much the same everywhere. I have already described one in the Soudan, and do not wish to inflict a further detailed description on my readers. This time we shot over ground south of the Kafue on the famous flats which then teemed with game. Even to-day they are fairly full of buck, lions and leopards. Some day, when Northern Rhodesia becomes more developed, this rich black alluvial soil will be growing crops; few people realise that there are millions of acres of virgin soil in Africa suitable in every way for high-grade crops. In Southern Asia such land has been producing for thousands of years wheat or rice, cotton or maize.

We used ox transport and rode "salted"<sup>1</sup> horses. We slept in the open, without even a mosquito net over us, and only once in the course of our three weeks' trek did we use a tent. To a varied bag I was fortunate enough to contribute two bull sable antelope with very fine heads; one of them I wounded, and I had to ride after him, with a loaded rifle in my hands, over very

<sup>1</sup> "Salted" horses are those which have survived horse sickness.

rough ground at a gallop. It was exciting when he turned and started to charge just as I grassed him.

During the first few days of the trip, Barnes and Harvey left my farm and started out in the waggons provided by one Cooper, a contractor of Livingstone. They arranged to send a waggon for me back to Monze on the railway.

Just after dark one evening I left the train at Monze. In those days no staff lived at the siding there, and my native servant and I were the only passengers to leave the train. As its tail-lights vanished in the distance, we were left sitting alone and forlorn on our baggage, waiting for the "boys" from the waggon. As, however, no "boys" appeared, I walked in the direction of the only light I could see in the place, which proved to be that of a store kept by an Englishman named Butts. He told me that there was a waggon of Cooper's near, but that, as it was outspanned some hundreds of yards away, he suggested that I should sleep in his store, adding that he would send one of his "boys" to tell the driver of the waggon that we would load in the morning. I gratefully accepted his offer, and spent a pleasant and amusing evening talking to Butts and a South African, with a clever, intelligent face and charming manners, who was walking round the world. He had come from Capetown, a distance of well over one thousand miles, and proposed to go on via the Congo and Soudan to Egypt, and thence via Palestine and Iraq to Persia! I have often wondered what became of my friend and how, when and where he was sucked into the vortex of the War. He started with a pound in his pocket, and by the conditions of the bet which he had made on the matter, he was not to borrow anything or

accept any gift, but to earn anything he received. I gave him a pound next day for superintending the unloading and reloading of the waggon which the native driver had loaded very badly. The waggon had a number of heads on it, and I thought that Barnes and Harvey must have had a wonderfully successful shoot during their three days in the bush.

When we were inspanned next morning, ready to start, I was rather surprised by the driver asking me—through Butts, for I cannot speak the local language—where we were bound for. I said, “Tell him where the other *bwanas* (gentlemen) are, of course; where he has come from.”

We started off, and after about three hours’ trek I began to wonder why we had not reached camp, since Barnes had said it was only four miles away, and oxen walk about two miles an hour. I told my servant, Thomas, who could speak a little English, to ask the driver what had happened. Thomas replied, “He say not know where going.” I replied that the man must be mad, or a complete fool, and he was to go back to the place where he had left the *bwanas*. Thomas said, “I told him he d——— fool (which was not what I said), and he say ‘All right, all right,’ and want to outspan.” “Outspan,” I said angrily, “of course he can’t outspan! He must get to camp.” I didn’t realise at that time that it was both cruel and foolish to trek all day without outspanning to rest the oxen, the driver and the piccanin who guided the leading yoke.

On and on we went under a pitiless sun, until it became dusk; we were going through thick bush, and once or twice I was nearly swept off the waggon by branches which I couldn’t see in the failing light.

At last, very reluctantly, for by then I was furiously angry with whomever was responsible for the obvious mistake, I gave the order to outspan for the night. We had no stores or food, except porridge, tea and some stale bread, as I had been relying on reaching the camp in two hours. Rhodesia is a country where every white man, unless he is financially "down and under," eats largely and heartily, as one must in those high altitudes with their bracing climate. Never in Africa, before or since, have I had such a miserable evening meal.

Next morning I got up at dawn to shoot a couple of pigeons for my breakfast. When I returned, Thomas handed me a note which had come by runner in my absence. It was from a young Englishman, also shooting from one of Cooper's waggons. He said that the waggon I had taken was not the one intended for me, but his, and would I kindly return it to Monze. The mass of heads was explained! "Well," I said, my delight at the prospect of getting a square meal before night overcoming my vexation at the whole *contretemps*, "we must inspan directly I have had breakfast." "No oxen," said Thomas, "driver has an (Thomas always said 'an' in each sentence) driven them away; he an say, 'Not my *bwana*; not an staying any longer.'" "What!" I said, so choked with rage and disappointment I could hardly speak, "He's gone off, and you let him go!" "Yes, Sare," said Thomas very earnestly, "I try to stop oxen, but driver and piccanin say, 'If you an touch those oxen I an kill you!'"

There was nothing to be done; I didn't know the track back to Monze, and in any event was not prepared to walk fourteen or fifteen miles in the blazing sun. Thomas was equally ignorant of the road, and

as a "house boy" (*i.e.* domestic servant) was quite unfitted to find his way by instinct through the bush. I decided to wait until either my own party, or that of the young Englishman, whose name was Tennant, came to rescue me. I spent a wretched day on milkless tea, porridge and broiled pigeons. Next morning I finished my porridge, and as my sole remaining means of sustenance was tea, I decided that there was nothing for it but to walk back to Monze, leaving Thomas in charge of the waggon. I had hardly gone a quarter of a mile when I was hopelessly "bushed"; I had no compass, the maps of the territory in those days were on a very large scale, and extremely vague, and the ox-waggon tracks of two days before had become obliterated. I wandered about for over two hours, dripping with perspiration, and half-dazed with the heat, anxiety and blind rage. But things change with extraordinary rapidity in Africa; suddenly and unexpectedly I came on a native village; then, to my utter astonishment, Thomas appeared on the scene, galloping wildly on a horse whose neck he was clasping, for he was as bad a horseman as Mr. Pellegrini. He was shouting at the top of his voice, and, as he said to me afterwards, it was to tell all the men, women and children of the village to come and look for me. When he saw me, he managed to pull up, with the aid of a number of little naked piccanins, who shooed his galloping steed into a cattle kraal. He brought me a note and joyful news. The note was from Tennant, who had reached my (or rather his) waggon with another waggon. He said that my friends were ten miles away, and he would take me there; my own waggon had arrived two hours after I had left Monze, and he hoped I would forgive

his driver<sup>1</sup> for going away and leaving me stranded; if so, he would forgive me for taking his waggon! He concluded by saying he had a large lunch and cold beer ready for me. All was well at last!

Another incident of note happened towards the end of our trip. We had a white hunter with us, one Jan Bothmar, a Dutchman of about nineteen years of age, who had led a hardy and adventurous life ever since he could remember. He and a native tracker whom he employed, called Ma'Kombie, were, in combination, two of the best *shikaris* whom I have ever met. They knew exactly in what neighbourhood any species of game was to be found, and would, without faltering or mistake, take one right up to easy rifle-range of any quarry.

Bothmar said we should find lions in a certain district. When we got there we saw a laager of Boer traders' waggons which lessened our chance of finding game, since it is the unfortunate habit of the average uneducated Dutchman to kill every wild animal that he can. The brown, laagered waggons, the dozens of cooking-fires, and the groups of grazing oxen, made, however, a charming picture. The friendliness and hospitality of the traders, some of whom had fought against us in the South African War, and had had all sorts of adventures and vicissitudes since then, were some compensation for our disappointment. Jan reported that most of the lions had moved, but that one or two were lying up near a neighbouring kopje. The next day we walked in line across the thick grass on the plain, and scrambled over the kopje in the hope of "flushing" a lion, like a partridge.

<sup>1</sup> The reason given to Tennant by the driver for his action was that he mistrusted me, and my intentions!



As we had no luck, we put a dead buck near a mound in the afternoon, and sat concealed behind it, hoping that lions would come to it before dusk. It was rather an eerie watch, and we were much troubled by wild dogs, who kept coming towards the carcase, and had to be shooed away.

Wild dogs are considered by many African hunters to be more dangerous than any of the larger carnivora, or even than elephant, rhinoceros or buffalo. It is said that they will follow in a pack any wounded animal, or even a man who is alone, and that however many are killed, there will be plenty more in the rear or on the flank to take the place of the casualties, until the victim is overwhelmed by sheer numbers. I think this is an exaggerated statement, but wild dogs are loathsome and sinister beasts.

At last it became so dark that reluctantly we decided to return to camp, when we saw, barely thirty yards in front of us, a pair of glittering eyes. As, however, we could none of us even see the sights of our rifles, despite the phosphorus on them, we came to the conclusion that it would be both cruel and dangerous to shoot, since, if we hit the animal at all, we should probably only wound it. So, clapping our hands to scare it away, we walked home. A lion, save when wounded or molested, is the most timid of beasts. This one vanished immediately it heard the hand-clapping.

After leaving Northern Rhodesia, I went to Bulawayo, and there, largely through the instrumentality of my friend, the genial "Tottie" Hay, auctioneer and farmer, then, as now, one of the most popular men in all Southern Rhodesia, I met a number of leading Southern Rhodesians, including Mr. Moffat, the present

Prime Minister. Even American and Canadian hospitality to visiting Englishmen cannot outvie that of the two Rhodesias.

From Bulawayo, Douglas Harvey and I went to Beira to take ship for home. I found the hotel in that much-abused town very comfortable, and I received much help and information from Mr. Lawley—of the firm of Pauling & Co.—who was known in those days as “the uncrowned King of Beira.”

The German ship on which we sailed was a comfortable boat, and the food was good; my principal recollection of her is the eternal rendering of *Puppchen* by the brass band on board. To the tune of this popular song a year later the German troops did their parade march through the streets of Antwerp. The ship called at Dar-es-Salaam, Aden, Port Said, and Naples, where I left her to go home overland.

She also stayed ten days at Kilindini, so Harvey, a young Rhodesian who was on our ship, and I made a trip up-country to Nairobi and Naivasha. Kenya, or British East Africa as it was then called, like all new countries, is a very hospitable place. We were entertained by many old and new friends, and had an amusing experience on the train journey to Nairobi. There were then no restaurant-cars on the Uganda Railway. Indeed, the accommodation generally was far less comfortable than on the Rhodesian railways, although the route through the famous game reserve compensated for any lack of luxury on the train.

We stopped at a station for dinner, and in the restaurant was a number of rather aggressive British East African farmers. One of them asked the Rhodesian, in somewhat truculent tones, where we had come

from. Rhodesians have a very proper local patriotism, and my friend replied, "From God's own country, between the Zambesi and the Limpopo, and from what I've seen of your country I don't want to leave it for East Africa." A furious argument as to the merits of the two territories ensued, and I thought the disputants would come to blows. At last an American Jew at another table said, "Excuse me, gentlemen, I am the one here that really comes from God's own country." "You bet your life you don't," said one of the East Africans, wilfully misunderstanding his meaning. "I can show you land up-country that'll beat every acre in the Judean hills or the plains of Canaan." Everyone, including the Jew, laughed, and peace was restored.

While we were in a tender going from ship to shore at Naples, a passenger who had shown several signs of eccentricity during the voyage, as the result of a head wound from a leopard in Kenya, came up to me and said, "I think you are an M.P. I may want your help at home. I have got a lot of enemies after me, and I don't mind telling you I've an automatic on me now to deal with them." To this remark I made as soothing a reply as I could on the spur of the moment. With me was an Italian friend, a Consul of his country in East Africa. He was a most charming and cultured man, and, incidentally, was one of those in the railway carriage at Tsavo, on the Uganda railway, when a lion jumped through the window and carried off a sleeping passenger.<sup>1</sup>

I had just got through the Customs when the Consul came up and said, "I think you ought to know that

<sup>1</sup> The story is related in Colonel Patterson's book, *The Man-eaters of Tsavo*.

your eccentric fellow-countryman has been arrested for threatening a policeman with a revolver; he may get ten years' imprisonment unless we get him put back on the ship under guard on the ground that he is mad; my fellow-countrymen have plenty of madmen of their own, and don't want any more. Shall I help you in the matter?"

I gratefully accepted his offer. Instead of having dinner and going to a play, we spent the next two hours in visiting Neapolitan police stations to inquire about the prisoner. In none of these squalid and noisome dens were we given any information, and in most of them we were received with distinct disfavour. The Consul said, when finally we gave up the quest, that we were very lucky not to have been arrested ourselves as accomplices of the prisoner, but, then, he was a Northern Italian, who liked Neapolitans as little as do most Northern Italians.

The next day, at the suggestion of my Italian friend, we went to see the British Consul. He took us to see the Prefect, with whom I at once made friends. Being myself by nature voluble, I like the exuberant verbosity of Latins when it is coupled with intelligence and charm. We sat in a large room with a fine view of the town and its incomparable Bay. The autumn sun shone on us and our glasses of Italian white wine, while we discoursed on all manner of subjects—men, women, politics, travel. The Prefect and I competed amiably for the honour of talking the more incessantly; at times one or other of the two Consuls tried to introduce the subject of the prisoner, but he was courteously waved aside by our host, who at last said, "About this prisoner—no, he cannot be released, he will probably get ten

years' imprisonment." We pleaded for the man, but in vain. Finally, we played our trump card; we said that statistics show that madmen live longer than anyone else; the man would certainly be found to be insane, and the Italian Government would have to keep him for twenty years at least; whereas if he were to be sent back on board in charge of two *carabinieri*, until the ship sailed, it would only cost a cab fare.

"Very well, very well," said the Prefect, rather testy for the first time. "Have it your own way." He rang the bell, and gave the necessary orders to his secretary. "I do not want to interrupt this interesting discussion with a distinguished visitor"—he bowed towards me—"by a silly argument about a bandit or a murderer or a madman or whatever he is. I will continue my discourse. Let us now take the case of the Trentino; in foreign relationship you must adjust yourself," etc., etc. I don't think to this day the Englishman knows to whom he owes his release.

On my return to England I rented the Rectory Cottage, Whissendine, and I hunted for a time with the Cottesmore. From my cottage I could see a great stretch of what is, perhaps, the best hunting country in all Great Britain. I enjoyed myself, for I had good sport and was living in a neighbourhood where I had heaps of friends. But there was a sterner game afoot than what Oscar Wilde unjustly described as "the pursuit of the uneatable by the unspeakable."

From the beginning of the Parliamentary Session of 1914 it was clear that Great Britain was heading for civil war, which was, indeed, averted only by the outbreak of the Great War on the 4th of August. The position has never been put better than it was by Mr.

Bonar Law, speaking at the opening of the Session of 1913.

“How is Home Rule going to be carried? . . . the opposition to this Bill, as everyone who has any knowledge of the facts knows, is steadily hardening in the north-east of Ireland, and not merely is the opposition to it hardening, but the determination to resist it and the organisation of the means by which it will be resisted. That is a fact. What are the Government going to do? They are attempting to do something which certainly was never attempted in any country by any Government in the world. In the name of self-government, above all things, they are going to force upon a great homogeneous community local autonomy by the sword, for it can be enforced in no other way. Is that possible? And they are going to try to force it when, as we believe, the majority of the people of this country are against them. . . .” (House of Commons, March 10th, 1913.)

Not everyone in England or Scotland at the time realised, and few in Great Britain to-day understand, the strength of the opposition of the majority in Ulster to a new Constitution, which would have put them, owing to their numerical inferiority, under the control of the dominant party in Southern Ireland. The Southern Irish were, and are, an example of what is usually, if, from the point of view of strictly scientific nomenclature, inaccurately, known as the Celtic type, with its characteristics of charm, inconstancy, thriftlessness and

wit, and a paradoxical blend of good humour and kindness, cruelty and callousness.

The descendants of Scottish settlers in Ulster were, and are, firm, purposeful and devoid of much charm or sense of humour. They represent a type which is loosely described as Nordic.

The hatred between the Ulster Protestants and the Irish Roman Catholics is only comparable to that between Moslems and Hindus in India in its bitterness and intensity, and in its complete difference of outlook on life in this world and the next. Many Indian friends of mine have told me, in private conversation, that they have been struck by the resemblance in spiritual outlook between Moslems and Protestants on the one hand, and Hindus and Roman Catholics on the other.

Most Englishmen, and all sentimental Radicals, falsely believe that self-government produces cohesion in any given geographical entity. They ignore the fact that national unity is based less upon geography than upon a common race and creed.

Put briefly, the position was that the homogeneous community of Ulster organised and armed itself to resist by force its incorporation in a new state, under a new constitution antipathetic to it on patriotic, religious, racial and economic grounds. History furnishes many examples of similar resistance which have been praised by impartial judges. Future historians alone can decide whether the action taken in Ulster was justified. Personally, I am convinced that it was; like many other Englishmen, including many Members of Parliament for English constituencies, I supported Ulster by signing the covenant which pledged its signatories to participate in her resistance. I resigned my commission

in the Yeomanry to be free for any action necessary. I was in Ireland at the time of the Curragh crisis, when Sir Hubert Gough and the officers of the Cavalry Brigade in Ireland asked for pledges from the Government that they would not be called upon to fire on the men of Ulster who, with the Union Jack as their flag, had formed themselves into a defence force. I was then staying with Sir James Craig, and saw a good deal, from the inside, of the organisation of the force.

A consistent pacifist is entitled to condemn Ulster out of hand because, in his opinion, resistance by force of arms is never justified. Since she asked no more than to be left in enjoyment of her existing rights and status, it is difficult for those who supported the War for Belgium's cause to condemn Ulster's action.

All through the spring and summer continued the ebb and flow of controversy over Home Rule and Ulster. Mr. Asquith, for the Government, and Sir Edward Carson, for the Ulstermen, failed to find a solution to avoid civil war.

The Prime Minister's power as a plenipotentiary was limited by the dependence of his Government upon Irish Nationalist votes in Parliament. The supporters of the Nationalists in Ireland would not have allowed them to agree to partition in any form, even had they been willing to do so. Sir Edward Carson, even if he had wished for it, could get no authority from his supporters for a plan involving the inclusion of Ulster in a scheme of federal Government for Ireland; they objected to any collaboration with the South.

Mr. Bonar Law carried out, with courage and consistency, his difficult duties as Leader of the Unionist Party all through these trying months. Like his suc-



cessor, Mr. Baldwin, he escaped what Disraeli, I think, called "the constant chatter of irresponsible frivolity," by wisely refraining from accepting, save in rare cases, invitations to luncheons, dinners or week-end parties. An interesting chapter of secret history could be written about the injury done to the careers and brains of certain statesmen who have allowed themselves to become "popular figures in society."

During May and June tempers in Parliament and in Ireland rose steadily, and the gun-running which was going on made the position progressively worse. By the end of June, Ulster occupied the centre of the national stage. The murder at Serajevo went almost unnoticed, save by some of us who realised the measureless dangers of the European situation. Three weeks or so later the position had altered. By then even the Irish situation could not distract men's attention from the signs and portents which presage war in Europe.

Late in July 1914 I went to Freiburg-im-Breisgau, to do a cure for colitis at Dr. Martin's sanatorium. On the morning of the 1st of August he came to my room to tell me that his establishment was about to be taken over by the Government for military purposes, and his staff mobilised. It was obvious that it was advisable to leave Germany as soon as possible, and I booked a sleeper on the evening Basle-Cologne-Flushing train. A relation of mine, who also had been an inmate of the sanatorium, and her husband decided to travel by the same train. She was seriously ill, and had to be carried on to the platform. We had a nightmare journey. The train arrived two hours late, and was fuller than I then imagined any train could be. The mobilisation of the German Army was in full swing,

and all civilians had been advised, or ordered, to go to their homes. Thus there was a double stream of traffic—that of reservists en route to the barracks of their units, and that of Germans, who had been on holiday, returning. In addition to this, thousands of foreign tourists were seeking to get out of Germany. By an irony of fate, the only empty carriage was the sleeping-car in which we had booked seats, but it had been deserted by its Swiss attendants at the frontier, and was locked, with a huge official German seal on the door.

With great difficulty, through Dr. Martin's efforts, a seat was obtained for my relative. I myself could not only not get a seat, but had the greatest difficulty in finding a place to stand among the press of people in the corridor. I had come straight to the train from my bed, as my cure had necessitated absolute rest and very little food; I did not feel very strong even at the start of the journey, but after standing from midnight until two in the morning, with the train stopping at nearly every station, I felt more utterly weak and exhausted than I have ever done before or since. At last, in desperation, I pushed my way to the entrance of the sleeping-car, and, with the aid of some good-natured German reservists, one of whom could speak English, burst open the door and broke the official seal. For the rest of the night I dozed fitfully, lying at full length in the corridor of the sleeping-car, for I was unable to smash open any of the doors of the compartments.

About eight in the morning we reached Cologne, where the platform was piled almost to the roof of the station with apparently abandoned registered luggage;

as far as the eye could reach were soldiers and bayonets. There was no restaurant-car on the train, so we tried to go to the buffet, but we were ordered back by an official, and an armed sentry was put at the door of each compartment, despite the threat of a party of Americans that they would write to "the President of the United States, who will, I guess, tell you folks what he thinks of you." Unfortunately, it was nearly three years later before he did so. At last we managed to secure some bread and slabs of chocolate.

On and on crawled the train, disgorging a mass of people at every station, but also taking in as many more. At last, towards mid-day, the train really did begin to empty, and I secured a seat next to a young man who greeted me warmly as a fellow-countryman; when, however, we were alone an hour or so later, he whispered to me that he was really an Alsatian and a German subject, though his mother was English. He said he was hoping to get out of the country with spurious identification papers. I was too tired to take much notice, and soon afterwards went into a doze. When I woke up he was gone.

After stopping at many little stations, each in charge of an armed guard, we reached the Dutch frontier about five in the afternoon. Here all the passengers had to pass a German officer, and satisfy him as to their identity. Most of the foreigners produced cards or letters addressed to them, and were let through. I had furnished myself with a passport for the journey, though this was neither obligatory nor usual in those days. When, however, I came to look for it, I found it was missing, having probably been stolen by the Alsatian to use as a surer means of getting out of Germany than his forged papers.

When I failed to produce the passport which I had said I had, the officer told me, roughly, to stand back, adding that my case required investigation. As the Dutch train on the other side of the frontier was blowing its whistle, and seemed about to leave, I decided to take strong measures. I demanded the use of the temporary military telephone which I noticed in the waiting-room, in order to communicate with one of the staff of the German Crown Prince, adding that I knew His Imperial Highness personally. A furious argument ensued between the officer and me, in the midst of which I flung on the table beside us an envelope addressed to me, with "M.P." after my name, and asked by what right English Members of Parliament were to be detained in Germany against their will, since, I added, "We are not yet at war with you."

I could see that the German was becoming convinced that I was who I purported to be, and at last he said, "I accept what you say; you are free to leave Germany." I bowed to him; he saluted in return; his men also saluted me, and I crossed the frontier, leaving him to deal with a long queue of angry Americans whose departure had been delayed by our altercation.

Travelling through Holland to Flushing was almost as tedious as the journey through Germany, though we did get a meal of sorts in a restaurant-car. There were soldiers with fixed bayonets on guard at every station and, as in Germany, everyone in the land seemed to want to get on our train. When at last we boarded the English Channel steamer, it was as crowded as the world through which we had, as it seemed, been travelling for endless ages, but I noticed that there was a difference in the crowd, which, utterly tired out as I

was, I failed at first to understand; then I realised, with relief, that there were no soldiers, no helmets and no bayonets on board. I felt that I never wanted to see soldiers again, but, as a matter of fact, for the next four years I saw little else. *L'homme propose, Dieu dispose.*

## L'ENVOI

THE day after I returned to England I went home to rejoin the Sussex Yeomanry. Thus I did not hear Sir Edward Grey's speeches on August 3rd and 4th, and for the next four years I only attended the House of Commons on five or six occasions. When I did go there I found the place very distasteful, for reasons which, since I love the House of Commons, I would rather not state.

The world of regimental officers and men in which I lived for the greater part of those four years took very little interest in the sayings and doings of the "great ones" of the world which I had just left. People were as little concerned with the patriotism of Mr. Lloyd George, as they were with the pacifism of Mr. Ramsay Macdonald. When they saw the name Wilson in a newspaper, few bothered to inquire whether it referred to the distinguished soldier or the celebrated President. One was a prominent staff officer, and the other a politician, and that was sufficient to condemn both of them in the eyes of those who could not criticise in public, but who did not, in private, spare mordant and satirical comment upon "red-tabs" and "frocks" alike.

But there were men of every rank, colour and creed in this new world, the happy memory of whose deeds and of whose comradeship not all the war books of neurasthenic conscripts can efface from my mind.



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